220 TRIATHLON

SWIM. BIKE. RUN. *FASTER!*

33
The Feed.
PTO
RŌKA
HOKA
TREK
fizi:k
SRAM

CONQUER THE IRONMAN BIKE

SPECIAL REPORT

WOMEN IN TRIATHLON: MOVING THE DIAL ON EQUAL PARTICIPATION

TRAIN LIKE A CHAMPION

INSIDE THE LIFE AND RACING OF T100 LEGEND **TAYLOR KNIBB**

VAN RYSEL XCR TRI

Ridden and rated

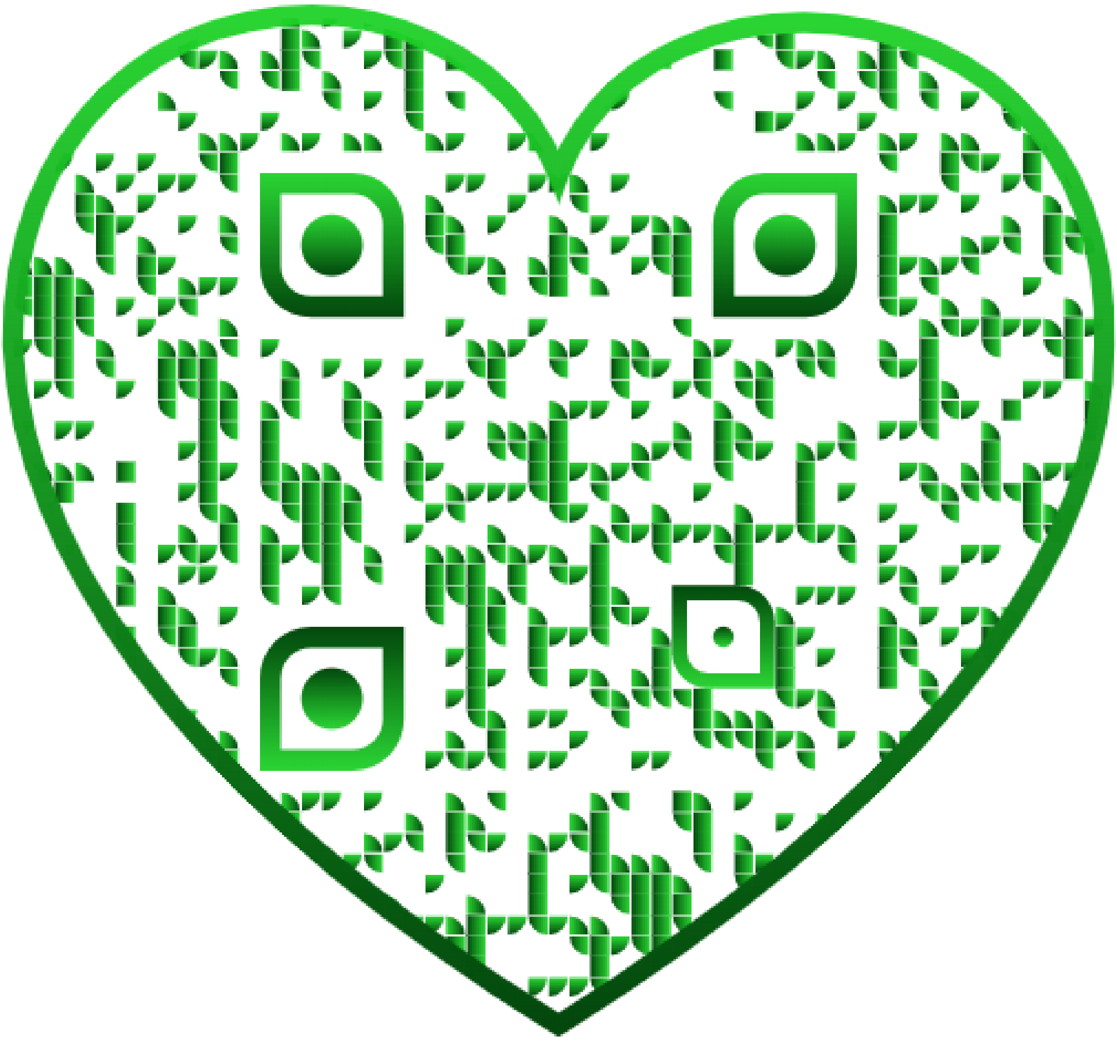
ON TEST

OPEN-WATER SWIM GOGGLES
WOMEN'S TOP-END TRI-SUITS
THE HOTTEST NEW KIT

PLUS

SUMMER EVENTS TO ENTER NOW
PRE-RACE FUELLING IDEAS
RACING CARDIFF TRIATHLON

KELSEYmedia
9 771479 150091 09
No. 445
Sept 2025
£5.99



SUBSCRIBE AND SAVE UP TO £44*!

THE UK'S LONGEST ESTABLISHED HILLWALKING MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2023
VOL XLVI NO. XI
THE GREAT OUTDOORS
"Let them be left, wildness and wet; Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet." GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS
THE ORIGINAL MOUNTAIN MAGAZINE
FROM SEA TO SUMMIT!
Hike Britain's Greatest Routes Combining Mountains and Water
A Skye Scramble to the UK's Greatest View
The Secret About Staying Dry That No One Tells You
Your Perfect Walking Weekend in Keswick
The 8 Best Waterproof Jackets
+ 5 Flasks Tried and Tested
The Lake District Trek That's (A Bit) Like the Alps
10 of Britain's Spookiest Walks
Step 5000 Years Into the Past in Alpine Austria
£4.90
★ PLUS Could the Right to Wild Camp be Won Across England?
SCOT
12
PUT

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Britain's original outdoor magazine is packed full of stunning photography, top class writing and brilliant walking and backpacking routes, along with authoritative gear reviews from the country's most experienced team of testers and essential skills advice from highly qualified outdoor instructors.

Great reasons to subscribe

- Save up to £44*
- Delivery directly to your door before they hit the shelves
- Never miss an issue
- Complete control – manage your account online
- Free weekly e-newsletters

VISIT SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/TGOHA
OR CALL 01959 543747 and quote code TGOHA
Scan our QR code – the easiest & quickest way!

SCAN HERE

HOTLINE OPEN: MONDAY-FRIDAY, 8.30AM-5.30PM. CALLS ARE CHARGED AT YOUR STANDARD NETWORK RATE

Terms & Conditions – UK Direct Debit offer only. You will pay £47.04 every 12 months. *Savings based on the standard basic annual rate of £91.80 which includes the cover price of £4.90 plus Kelsey Media's standard postage and packing price per single issue for one full year (12 issues). Offer ends 31st December 2025. Your subscription will start with the next available issue, and you will receive 12 issues in a year. Prices correct at time of print and subject to change. For full terms and conditions visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms. Data protection: We take great care in handling your personal details and these will only ever be used as set out in our privacy policy which can be viewed at shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. You may unsubscribe at any time. If you decide to cancel your subscription, we will put a stop to any further payments being taken and will send the remaining issues that you have already paid for.

GETTY IMAGES

We have some fantastic female role models in triathlon. But this issue, we explore whether all women have a positive experience in the sport.

FROM THE EDITOR…

My journey in triathlon started some 15 years ago now. I've competed in most distances in triathlon, swimrun, running and open-water swimming events over the years and mostly considered my experiences to be good ones. But as a woman competing in the sport, I have to admit I'd never closely considered how my experience might differ from the male one. A few months ago however, I came across the work of Bianca Fernandez-Clark and Sophie Powers and their eye-opening report 'Closing the gender gap: tackling the underrepresentation of women in triathlon' and it changed my perception. We explore the topic in detail this month (p30) and I'd encourage anyone linked to multisport to read it. By making tri more welcoming to all, we'll improve the sport overall – and that can only be a good thing!

Santini
220 TRI
220 TRI

Helen

Helen Webster, editor

TRIATHLON
TRAIN LIKE A CHAMPION

NEVER MISS A COPY OF 220!

EXCLUSIVE OFFER WITH FREE HOME DELIVERY

We want to make it as easy as possible for our readers to get their copy of *220 Triathlon* magazine, so why not take out a subscription? Turn to p20 to find out how to get the magazine delivered to your door every month. Plus, sign up today and you'll receive your first six issues for just £19.97!

CONTENTS

START

P6 THE BIG PIC
P14 STATE OF PLAY
P16 WHY I TRI
P16 HOTTEST NEW GEAR
P18 PRO Q&A

KIT ZONE

P39 KIT ZONE
P47 GEAR FOCUS
P50 BIKE TEST: VAN RYSEL XCR
P56 OPEN-WATER GOGGLES
P64 TOP-END TRI-SUITS
P70 KIT GUIDE

TRAINING

P76 IRONMAN IN SIX MONTHS
P83 NUTRITION

REGULARS

P22 SUBSCRIBE
P38 BACK ISSUES
P82 NEXT MONTH
P86 HOW WAS IT FOR YOU
P92 RACE CALENDAR
P96 FAQ: NON-WETSUIT SWIMS
P97 JARGON BUSTER
P98 WEEKEND WARRIOR

SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

SAVE UP TO £35

AND NEVER MISS AN ISSUE

>> SEE PAGE 22

24

CATCHING UP WITH TAYLOR

Taylor Knibb is widely regarded as the triathlon GOAT-in-waiting. We chat with her about the season ahead and why she always has two books on the go...

GETTY IMAGES

IN THIS ISSUE

GETTY IMAGES

30

MIND THE (GENDER) GAP

A special report has examined women's experiences in triathlon – and it's already creating change at the top level.

TRIATHLON
TRAIN LIKE A CHAMPION

ON TEST: GOGGLES FOR THE OPEN-WATER

56 Still using your basic pool goggles in races? You're missing a trick. Check these out!

ON TEST: WOMEN'S TOP-END TRI-SUITS

64 If you're racing at the pointy end you'll need a suit that performs – like one of these.

RIDE STRONGER FOR IRONMAN

76 Part two of our 'six months to Tenby' series sees cycle training take the stage.

TAKING ON CARDIFF TRIATHLON

86 How does it feel to start your season with a city event?

ON THE COVER

56

HELEN WEBSTER

64

ED BROADLEY

86

GWYNFOR JAMES

76

GETTY IMAGES

START

DIVE INTO THE WORLD OF TRI

LOTTO
PORT GDAŃSK
PORT GDAŃSK
PORT GDAŃSK

THE BIG PIC

Challenge Gdansk, Poland, gets underway on 22 June. Marcel Bolbat (GER) would set a new race record to win in 3:44:03, after closing a 2:30min gap on the run to second-place Louis Woodgate (GRE). Swiss Nina Derron – sister of Olympic silver medallist Julie – led from bike to tape, with a finishing time of 4:15:41.

TIZIANO BALLABIO

▲ Paralympic PTS4 hero Alexis Hanquinquant (FRA) helps keep the military volunteers cool after completing – and winning, naturally – the World Triathlon Para Series Taranto, southern Italy, which took place on 7 June.

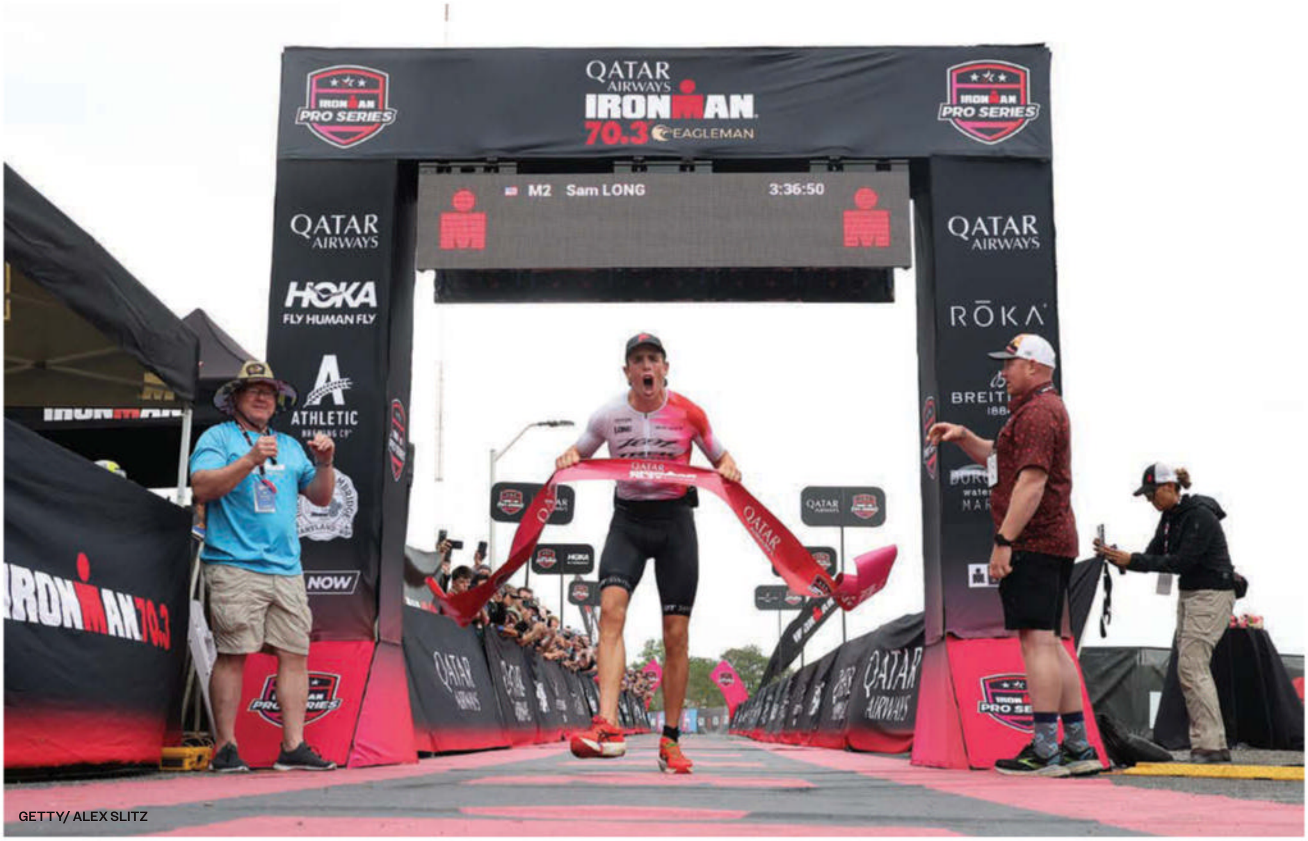
ROGER TRICE

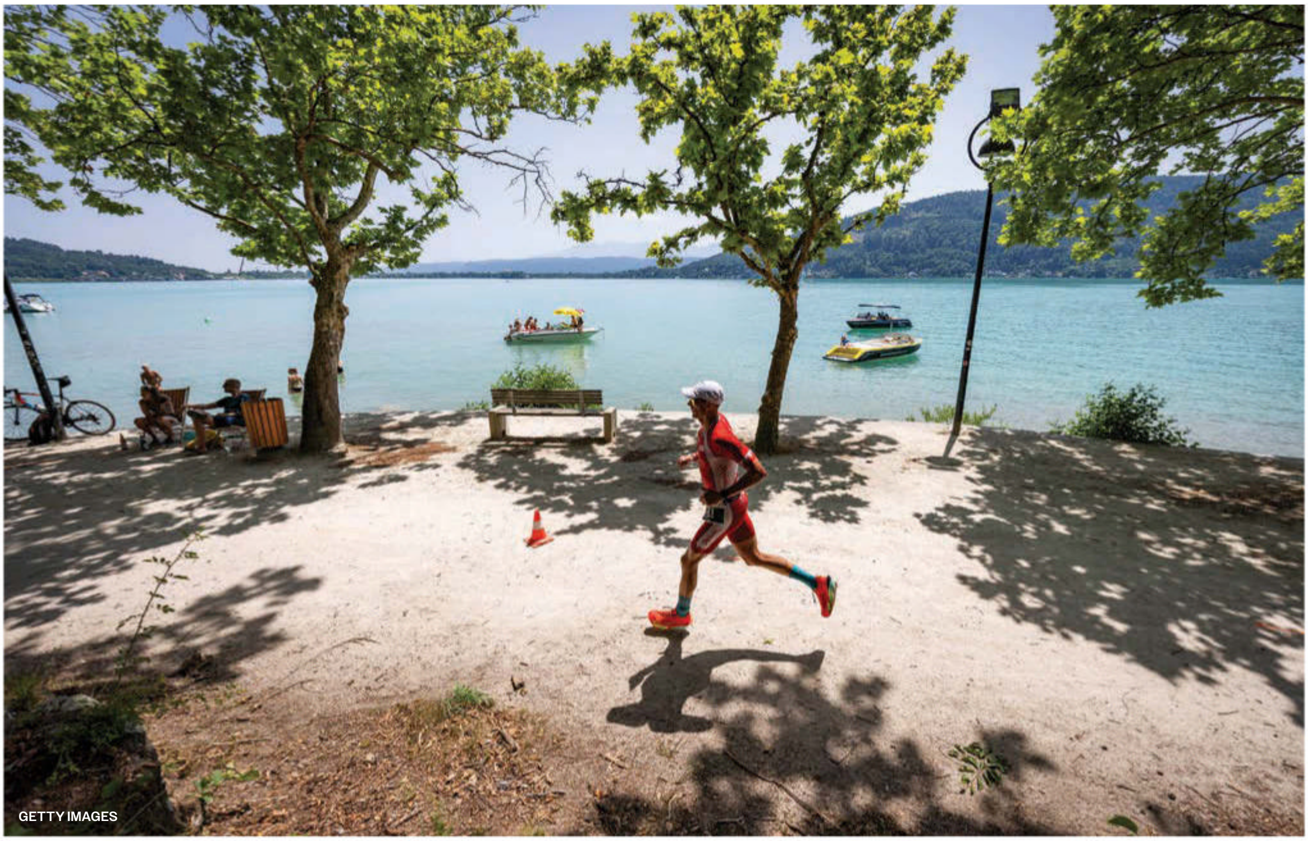
◀ An age-grouper flies past a row of houses during the 90km bike leg of Ironman 70.3 Bolton on 8 June. The amateur-only race saw wins for British athletes Lewis Eccleston in 4:02:50 and Katie Walker in 4:40:48.

▶ The reigning T100 champion Taylor Knibb in her happy place – out front and in control of the race – at Vancouver T100, on 14 June. Knibb's victory was her first T100 win of the year after placing second in San Fran at the end of May. GB's Jess Learmonth was looking great for second but was caught in the last kilometer by Julie Derron (SUI). The Brit would still take third and her first T100 podium.

T100

▼ Sam 'Big Unit' Long takes the tape at Ironman 70.3 Eagleman on 8 June. "This win was for the family," he posted on Instagram. "On a day where nothing felt great and everything came hard, I had to dig deep and find a way to get it done."


QATAR AIRWAYS
IRONMAN 70.3 EAGLEMAN
IRONMAN PRO SERIES
M2 Sam LONG 3:36:50
HOKA FLY HUMAN FLY
RŌKA
GETTY/ ALEX SLITZ



GETTY IMAGES

▲ A competitor on the marathon leg of Ironman Austria runs along the shoreline of tranquil Lake Wörthersee. The race, on 15 June, was notable for British fans as race-win hopeful Joe Skipper made an uncharacteristic DNF – "I had absolutely nothing in the tank from the off," said the GB pro post-race.

GETTY IMAGES

◀ Ironman 70.3 Westfriesland starts with a unique swim course in the old harbour of Hoorn, in the Netherlands. This year's race, on 22 June, saw a home win from Marlene de Boer (4:12:25) and Denmark's Mathias Petersen (3:43:38). GB's Tom Bishop was third in 3:45:55.

▶ Male and female age-groupers run out and back to Le Phare Vert at Ironman Les Sables d'Olonne, on 22 June. The women-only pro race was won by GB's India Lee in a gun-to-tape masterclass, with a time of 8:24:37. The victory was her second on French soil in three weeks, after taking the tape at 70.3 Tours Metropole-Loire Valley on 1 June.

ZBOROWSKI/ACTIV'IMAGES

▼The female British success continued on 29 June, this time at Ironman 70.3 Nice for Jess Learmonth. The win, in 4:39:54, was her first half-Ironman victory and also bagged her a slot at the 2025 Ironman Worlds in Marbella, in November.

VILLE DE NICE
IRONMAN 70.3 NICE
NICE

GETTY IMAGES

GETTY IMAGES

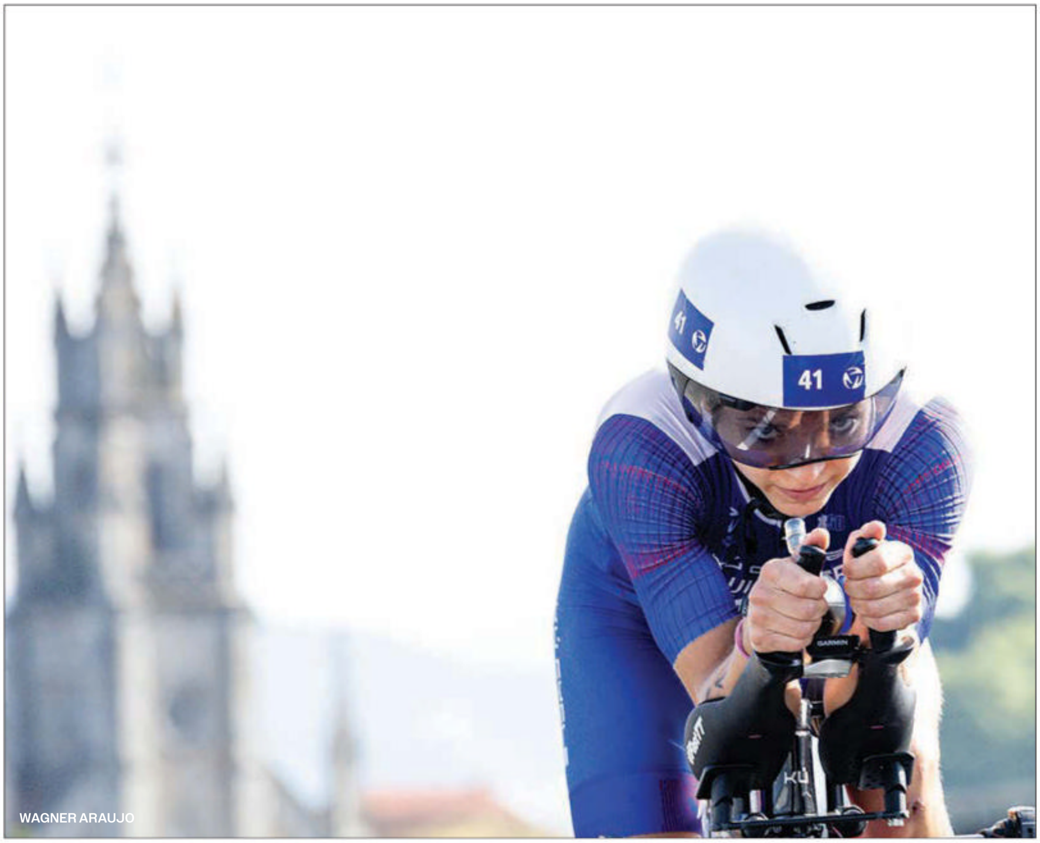
BEN LUMLEY

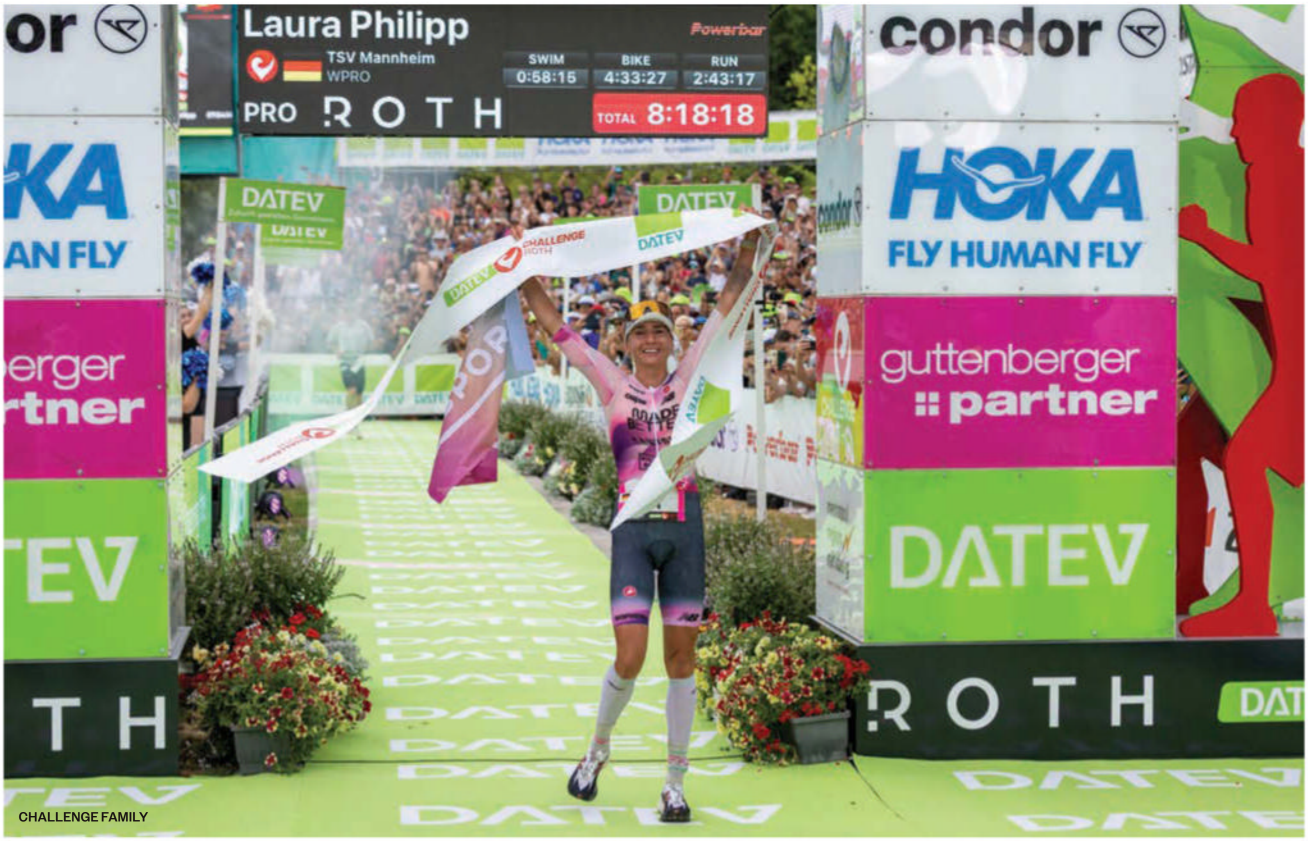
▲ Kristian Blummenfelt gets a surprise jolt from his compatriot Caspar Stornes – hidden by the bouquet – on the Ironman Frankfurt podium, on 29 June. Blummenfelt retained his title after clawing back an 8min deficit on the run to eventual second-place finisher, Kristian Høgenhaug. The race was also memorable for the number of high-profile penalties, including a red card, which was later rescinded, to Magnus Ditlev for littering.

◀ Saidia, Morocco, sizzled under 30-degree heat as it hosted its debut World Cup on 29 June. The race saw wins for Diana Isakova (AIN) in the women's race and an outstanding World Cup debut victory for 19-year-old GB junior, Oliver Conway, who will also be making his Supertri League entrance in 2025 as a member of the Brownlee Racing team.

▶ France's Aurelia Boulanger stays laser focused on the 120km bike leg of the World Triathlon Long Distance Championship, Pontevedra, on 29 June. Sadly her day would end with a DNF, but the title was at least won by her compatriot – the 2023 champion, Marjolaine Pierre. Spain's Antonio Benito Lopez defended his title in the men's race.

▼ To the delight of the home crowd, world Ironman champion Laura Philipp crosses the line for her first Challenge Roth victory. Taking the lead just before T2, the German star ran solo for the marathon to win with a time of 8:18:18. "The eight hours will fall at some point," said Philipp post-race. "The fact that it didn't happen today doesn't mean it can't be done." 2023 world IM champ Sam Laidlow took the men's crown (also his first in Roth) in 7:29:35.


WAGNER ARAUJO


Laura Philipp
TSV Mannheim
WPRO
SWIM 0:58:15
BIKE 4:33:27
RUN 2:43:17
PRO ROTH
TOTAL 8:18:18
HOKA
FLY HUMAN FLY
guttenberger partner
DATEV
condor
CHALLENGE FAMILY

GETTY IMAGES

Race organisers have a responsibility to keep racing fair, as well as ensuring athletes have a great experience.

TIM HEMING

Cutting through the spin of tri to address the issues that matter, Tim is a sports journalist who has written extensively on triathlon for the national press.

BEFORE YOU BLAME THE ORGANISER

Yes, they make mistakes, but race directors and their teams are working hard to improve your race from start to finish, says Tim Heming

STATE OF PLAY

Race organisations in triathlon are often criticised. They're easy targets. Triathlon can be an expensive sport, the bigger brands carry more prestige, promise a premium experience, and charge higher entry prices. So, when customers aren't satisfied, they can be vocal.

But the organisations also listen to their communities, and in the past few weeks I've witnessed a number of examples that deserve acknowledgement.

Let's start with World Triathlon. In running its multisport World Championships in Pontevedra, older age-groups started in later waves and some athletes didn't make the time cut-off. Initially, these results were annulled as per the rules, but met with vehement protests, World Triathlon swiftly relented, and reinstated the times for finishers.

Correcting an error? Not necessarily. The scheduling isn't just random selection. With bike paces varying greatly, who will be sharing the course at the same time is a key safety consideration to prevent high-speed incidents. Neither are cut-off times arbitrary when it comes to road closures or volunteer welfare. World Triathlon adapted and found a solution.

Now take Ironman's decision to change the qualification process for its full distance and 70.3 world championships. It's a move that should give high level amateurs a fairer chance of qualifying – irrespective of age or gender.

What looks like a complicated change is relatively straightforward. Rather than the number of available slots being distributed through the age-groups depending on participation numbers, i.e., More Men 30–34 than Women 30–34, so more slots to the men, triathletes will be racing against the whole field in an age-adjusted score. One problem this solves is where you had two high quality athletes in a less well represented age-group, say Women's 60–64. Previously, they would be racing for a single world championship slot. Under the new system, the age-group winner still gets a place, but other athletes in the category can qualify as long as they are competitive in relative terms.

It's explained in greater depth at 220triathlon.com, but for the avoidance of doubt, all the math will be calculated as soon as athletes cross the finish line, so no change to knowing whether you'll be offered a spot or not.

Another aspect of intelligent race management that came to light was Challenge Roth's increased focus on age-group drug testing this year.

It falls outside the remit of the German National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), whose core focus is elite sport, but under the leadership of Felix Walchshöfer, Roth funded NADA's involvement because it recognised the importance of competition within amateur sport.

It's not just an emphasis on catching cheats – especially given that in-competition testing has limited effectiveness (relative to out-of-competition) – but it raises awareness, acts as a deterrent and gives education on areas such as painkillers and intravenous therapies that often cross a line for banned use.

The smaller brands are getting it right too. I've been at local races recently such as the Cotswold 113 and UK Triathlon in Shropshire where sensible decisions are made to support athletes.

Many participants are first-timers, and not only are entry fees more affordable, but if race plans start heading south there's regularly the flexibility to switch distances or defer, with sensible approaches taken to refund policies. Organisers know their reputation rests on treating customers fairly.

Event participation hasn't recovered to pre-pandemic levels and there is a myriad choice of alternatives to triathlon, but if organisers keep making better decisions, then we have every chance of getting there. 220

ALL THAT
IT TAKES
IS ALL THAT
YOU'VE GOT
brutalevents.co.uk

SERIOUSLY BRUTAL DUATHLON

September 20th 2025 North Wales

Distances: Bach/Standard, Canol/Half, Mawr/Full and Cawr/Double (triathlon only)

thebrutal extremetriathlons

WHY I TRI

"I HAD PAIN FROM TWO ILLNESSES, BUT BEING IN THE SEA EVERY DAY HELPED"

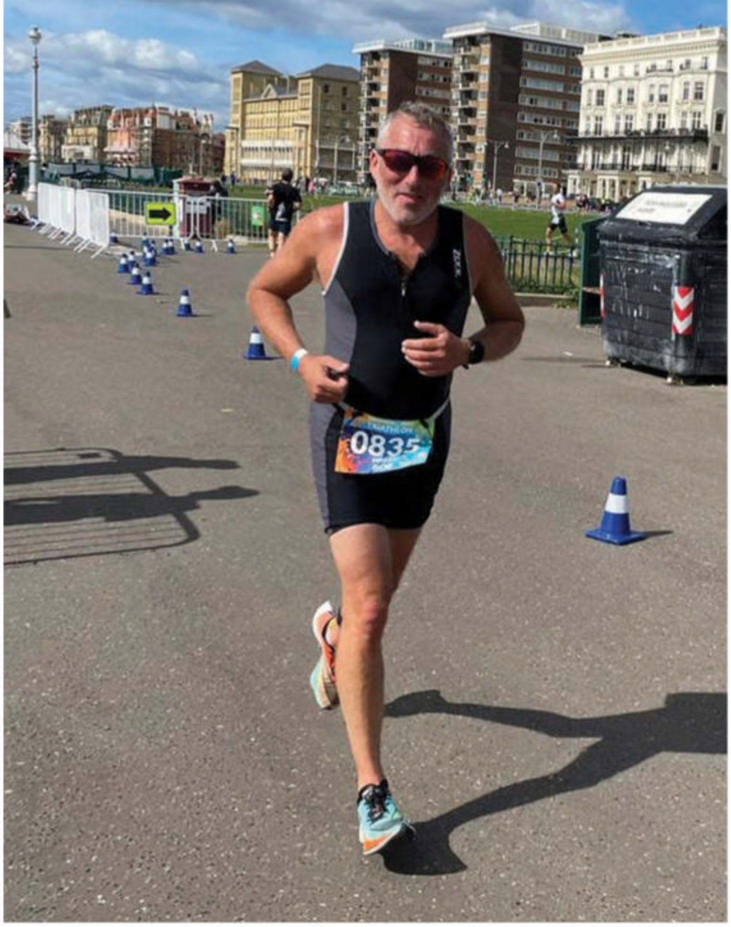
Rob Starr struggles with Crohn's disease and arthritis – but also completes sporting challenges most people can only dream of…

ROB STARR

Rob Starr MBE is 56 years old and lives in Brighton. He was diagnosed with Crohn's disease at age 18, osteoporosis at 25 and arthritis at 30. He has run his own insurance business for 35 years, is a charity founder and an author. He was awarded an MBE in the 2025 Kings Honours list.

My journey into triathlon began in 2014 when I was 45. Four years prior to this I was trying to raise some money for the Starr Trust, a charity I founded which supports young people. My plan was to run my first marathon, but it proved difficult to train because of frequent arthritic pain. As my training was along the seafront in Brighton I found myself often gazing out to sea in frustration. It occurred to me that maybe I should do a swimming challenge rather than a running one as it would remove the pounding to my right leg. The fact I was an inexperienced swimmer never really occurred to me. I went home that day and booked myself a spot to swim the channel for two years later.

Before starting to sea swim for this event I was on a lot of medication, to control my Crohn's disease and arthritis. Within just a few months of being in the sea every day I came off all my medication, it was astonishing how well I suddenly felt. I found that I had trouble keeping weight on because of my Crohn's disease and hit a silly eight stone at one point, but it was still better than taking all those pills. And, of course, I still had pains from both illnesses, but being in the sea every day made it all very bearable and much easier than it had ever been.



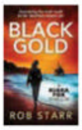
"After my Channel swim in 2012 I found I had developed a bug for eventing. The next year I bought a bike and cycled up Mount Ventoux in the Alps"

After my channel swim in 2012 I found I had developed a bug for eventing. The next year I bought a bike and cycled up Mount Ventoux in the Alps. The year after that I ran my first marathon, and then triathlon entered my life. The thought of combining all three events into one was too good a chance to miss. I started with Olympic distance, before moving to half Ironman and then in 2020 I completed my first full iron distance – that was a real eye opener.

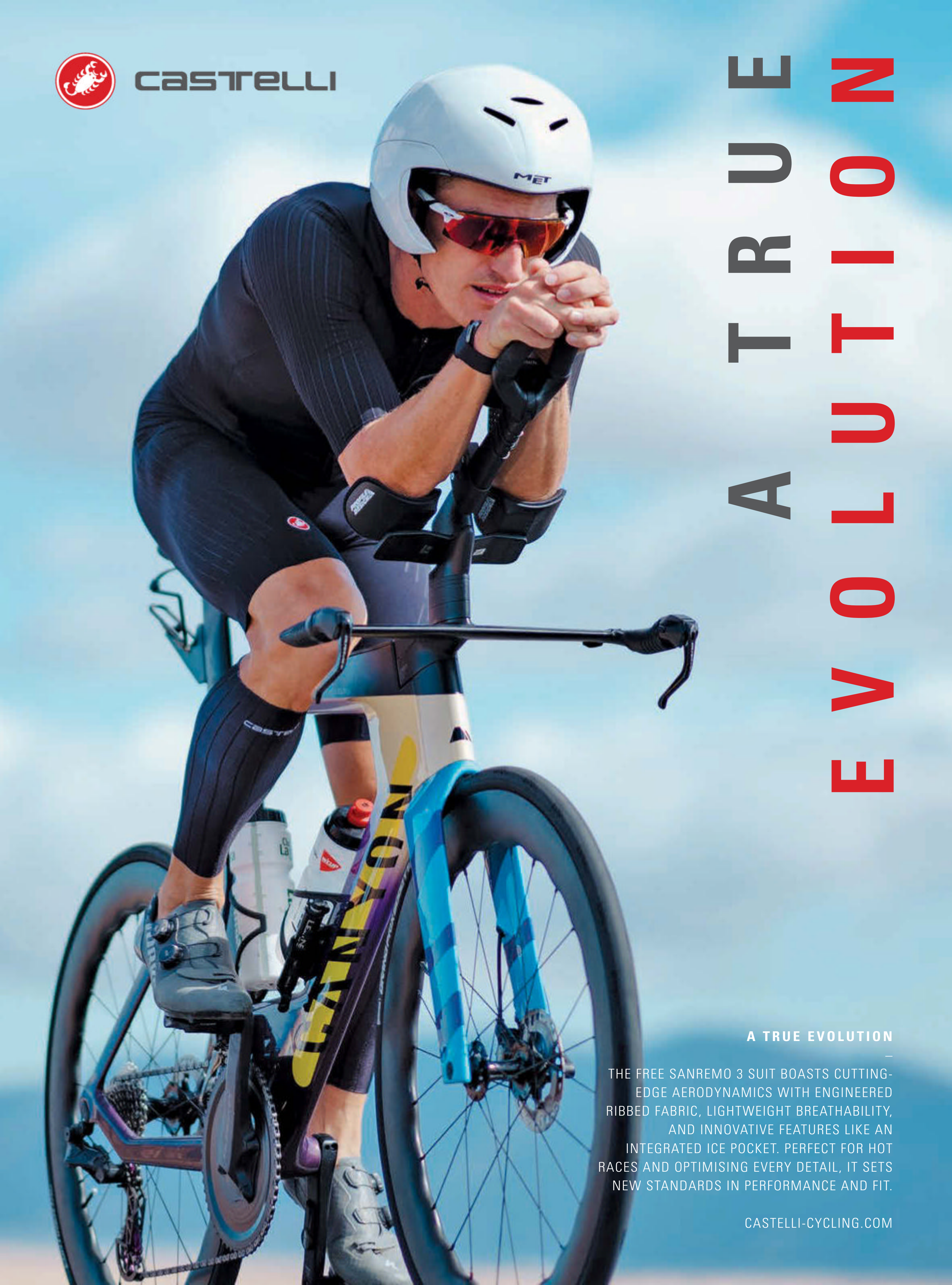
In 2022, as another charity fundraiser, I decided to complete 52 Olympic Triathlons in 52 weeks. That was physically pushing myself, and both my Crohn's and arthritis complained a lot, but I still never went back to the medication and I raised over £105,000 for the Starr Trust. My next event, planned for 2026 is my first ever ultra marathon 100k run – that will be interesting!

I'm also a published author and my latest novel, *Black Gold*, was out in July. It's the second instalment of a female-driven international crime thriller series following *The First Widow*, which came out last year. I've even made triathlon the main hobby of its protagonist.

I'd recommend the sport to anyone. Triathlon has given me such a focus and a reason to make sure I swim in the sea every day before work. It has proved that for me exercise is far better than medication.



Black Gold by Rob Starr is published by Just Once Publishing and is available to buy now.



A TRUE EVOLUTION

THE FREE SANREMO 3 SUIT BOASTS CUTTING-EDGE AERODYNAMICS WITH ENGINEERED RIBBED FABRIC, LIGHTWEIGHT BREATHABILITY, AND INNOVATIVE FEATURES LIKE AN INTEGRATED ICE POCKET. PERFECT FOR HOT RACES AND OPTIMISING EVERY DETAIL, IT SETS NEW STANDARDS IN PERFORMANCE AND FIT.

CASTELLI-CYCLING.COM

WORLDTRIATHLON

THE GRAFTER

US college track star Morgan Pearson has been unleashing his devastating run speed on the WTCS since 2018, and now it's T100's turn. Let's meet the two-time Olympic medallist...

INTERVIEW
LIZ BARRETT

IMAGES
T100 AND TOMMY ZAFERES/WORLD TRI

The day Morgan Pearson decided to try his hand at triathlon must have been a celebratory one for the US Olympic selectors. A seven-time All-American in track and cross-country at the University of Colorado, in 2017 he won his age-group at USA Triathlon's national championships before turning pro the following season.

Despite starting at the comparatively 'old' age of 24, Pearson has since proved a solid and safe pair of legs, particularly in the mixed relay format where he's helped steer the US squad to two consecutive Olympic silver medals in Tokyo and Paris.

The Boulder-based pro has yet to shine as bright on the individual Olympic stage, but the 2028 LA Games are firmly in his crosshairs. For 2025, though, he's several races in to an ambitious race schedule that's covering both the WTCS and, in his season debut, the T100.

And it's after his first 100k race in San Francisco when we catch up with him to talk bike skills, what went wrong in Paris and his love for Lionel Sanders...

220: Eighth in your first T100, how was the experience?

Morgan Pearson: It was amazing. I haven't done a tonne of high-level races in the U.S so having my friends and family there was great. I think the biggest takeaway, though, is improving my bike. I'd love to improve my power and fitness but the biggest gains will be made on how I ride the bike – so aerodynamics, keeping speed, how I use other cyclists in the race, etc.

The first bike lap, I really shot myself in the foot. My visor was completely fogged so I couldn't see anything! I was trying my best to not get a draft penalty (only my second non-drafting race and the first one with Race Ranger). I went from leading the race to 14th place in the first five minutes. Most of that had to do with me riding tentatively.

I do think I can clean up my first bike lap a lot, though, and hopefully set myself up for a better ride in general. A few gear changes might help, along with a second race using Race Ranger. I'm also hoping the swim plays a bigger part in the race. I've actually felt really solid in the pool – by far the best I've felt since breaking my wrist [the result of a bike crash in training in the spring]. Having the field a bit more spread out could potentially help me.

I believe I'm at 60% fitness right now, so if I can stay healthy and consistent I'll get stronger and more competitive in my later races. [Two weeks after San Fran, Morgan would finish seventh at his second T100, in Vancouver, and clock the fastest swim and run splits.]

220: How much of a setback was missing the opening T100 in Singapore in terms of chasing the T100 title?

MP: Missing Singapore probably wouldn't have affected my overall T100 score too much. I took a break in February so I likely wouldn't have done super well there. That being said, getting that race experience would have been huge and might have helped me in San Fran.

Breaking my wrist, however, was super hard on me. Physically I struggled, I was out of the pool for basically two months (unless you count swimming with a cast on!). I also kept getting sick. I wasn't sleeping well, but I was still biking and running a lot while my body was trying to heal a broken bone. It was just hard physically and mentally, and I wasn't fun to be around!

I'm really excited for the rest of the season, though. I know I have a lot of room for growth and I'm excited to progress and hopefully compete at the front more.

220: And having raced Yokohama WTCS, which you won last year, what are your thoughts on where everyone's at for the 2025 season?

MP: I wasn't in a good place and wasn't really in the race [Pearson would place 25th], so it's hard to really say. Matt Hauser and Vasco [Vilaça] seem to be the best right now. Matt's swim and run combined is really ▸

Career highlights

While he's yet to show true consistency, Morgan's results still show world-beating class – not to mention those two Olympic medals...

8th, San Francisco T100, 2024

1st, Ironman 70.3 Indian Wells, 2024

2 x Olympic Games triathlon relay silver medallist (Tokyo, Paris)

1st, WTCS Yokohama, 2024

Morgan Pearson has helped the US squad (left) achieve two relay silvers

WAGNER ARÚJO

> *"Breaking my wrist was super-hard on me. Physically I struggled and I was out of the pool for basically two months (unless you count swimming in a cast!)."*

San Francisco was Pearson's first T100 race and he finished in eighth place despite a rough period recovering from injury and sickness.

T100

impressive and he's a smart racer.

220: You won your one and only to date 70.3 in December [at Indian Wells], how was that experience over the middle distance?
MP: It was a lot of fun, and I didn't put any pressure on myself. I had a busy few weeks leading into the race, balancing some travel, moving and holidays. And I only had the TT bike for maybe four weeks or so, so I trained the best I could given the circumstances. But after Paris I didn't want to put too much pressure on myself, so to come away with the win was super fun!

220: You've got a packed schedule this year – WTCS, T100 and run races. How do you make sure you get enough recovery between all that?
MP: It's about being smart in race selection more than anything. Travelling to San Francisco and doing a 100k distance is way easier than going to Abu Dhabi and doing a sprint (at least in my opinion). For example, I'm skipping Hamburg and London [WTCS and T100, respectively] to get in a nice training block.

I ran a half marathon in January and a few track races but probably won't do many more run races this year.

> *"I just started working with a bike coach after being a bit frustrated with how I was racing. My numbers were solid in training but I felt I lacked a lot of race craft."*

220: Talk us through your training set-up.
MP: I've been training with [Boulder's] Flatiron swimming club. They just moved to long course so I'm really excited about that. I'll also go to [former pro and Olympian] Julie Diben's masters swim 1-2 times a week.

I just started working with a bike coach, Daniel Holloway, after being a bit frustrated with how I was racing. My numbers were solid in training but I felt I lacked a lot of race craft. This summer we're planning on doing some bike races together, too, where he coaches me mid-race. He won USA crit nationals a few times so he's very good with that stuff.

And on the run, [2000 triathlon Olympian] Ryan Bolton does my overall training and running. Balancing it all has been a work in progress but we're getting there.

220: What do you do in your down time?
MP: I have less down time than you'd think. I try to use Normatec [compression] boots and play a video game or read for an hour or so in the middle of the day. At night I cook with my girlfriend and watch a TV show.

220: Like many elites, you regularly share your training on Instagram. Do you enjoy that side of the job?
MP: Yes, it's cool to share my training. Hopefully some people enjoy seeing it. I don't take myself too seriously but I do try to put myself out there. I just try to be consistent and genuine to myself. If I wanted to I could probably work the algorithm a bit more. I do post a lot but I don't really put too much thought into it. I care about performance, and social media is part of the job.

220: Tell us about your Paris Olympics experience compared to Tokyo. Another amazing silver medal but a very different Games experience.
MP: The individual race will haunt me the rest of my life [Pearson placed 31st]. However, I really liked how we came together as a team and got the silver medal.

In Tokyo, I showed up completely exhausted. My older brother Andrew passed away in the March [from an

Learnings from the San Fancisco T100 for Pearson are mainly around improving on the bike leg.

T100

Taking the tape at the WTCS race in Yokohama is a career-to-date highlight.

ENEOS
NTT
World Triathlon
World Triathlon Championship Series YOKOHAMA 2024
YOKOHAMA
Be your extraordinary
2XU PEARSON USA

TOMMY ZAFERES/WORLD TRIATHLON

undiagnosed heart ailment in his sleep] so just making the team was a monumental effort. I think if things had gone differently I could have been more competitive but I was dealing with a lot. The relay was super special, though. I only started the sport in 2018 so to go from someone who didn't know anything about triathlon in 2017 to an Olympic medalist in four years was pretty cool.

220: An American male has yet to win an individual Olympic tri medal. Why do you think that is?
MP: We didn't prepare correctly last year. The swim was insane and despite asking for help with how to navigate a current multiple times, I didn't get much help outside of 'watch the women's race' or 'get in good feet'. It was too little too late, and I should have been prepared for the currents. I could have hired an expert or prepared in a more professional manner instead of hoping for the best and relying on my swim fitness. If we'd prepared for the unique conditions, I believe we would have had a good chance.

220: Compatriot Reese Vannerson's been getting a lot of attention, how much are you keeping an eye on these youngsters coming through the ranks?
MP: I'm happy for him. When I started triathlon USA men were garbage. Getting a top 15 in a WTCS was considered a big deal. We're still a far cry from teams like France, but I'd say in general we've improved which is cool to see.

220: How much support do you get from USAT [the USA's British Triathlon equivalent]?
MP: $20k living stipend, a camp budget that changes – but basically helps me pay for most triathlon expenses – health insurance, and travel and lodging per diem for WTCS races. Ryan, who works for USAT, is a huge support to me, both training and emotionally

220: So, LA 2028, is that the ultimate short-course goal right now?
MP: Yes and no. I put so much on Paris, so right now I'm just trying to enjoy being able to do this.

220: If you could steal any triathlete's skills, whose and what would they be and why?
MP: Lionel Sanders' ability to push himself. Lionel is one of my biggest inspirations in the sport and in life. He never gives up and is the ultimate fighter.

220: What's your ultimate goal in triathlon?
MP: Olympic gold. **220**

A day in the life of Morgan Pearson

An average day for Morgan Pearson involves banter with the lads, compression boots and plenty of food...

7:30am: Wake up naturally. Coffee, write in training journal, no breakfast
8:30am: Leave for pool - get there early for activation and mobility
9am: 5km set in a 25m pool, with 3km main set
10:30am: Swim finishes, catch up with a few of the other training guys - banter!
11am: Get home, big breakfast
11:30-1pm: Shower, relax, Normatec boots, emails, get bike ready etc. more food
1-4pm: Bike ride with interval (hard ride)
4pm: Get home and run off the bike 4-5 miles
4:45pm: Heavy snack/late lunch
5pm: Core/mobility work then sauna
7pm: Make dinner, eat, clean up
8:30-10pm: Watch a show or movie with my girlfriend
10pm: Sleep

Pearson's swim training sets are typically a 5km session before brekkie!

ROKA PEARSON

TOMMY ZAFERES

220 TRIATHLON SWIM. BIKE. RUN. *FASTER!*

ORDER FORM

☐ **UK DIRECT DEBIT – 6 issues for £19.97 Saving 62%***
Your subscription will then continue at a rate of £44.99 every 12 months (12 issues)

☐ **UK CREDIT/DEBIT CARD – 12 issues for £49.99 Saving 52%***

☐ **CHEQUE – £49.99**

YOUR DETAILS

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms Forename
Surname
Address

Postcode/Zip code
Country
Mobile
Email

IF DELIVERY ADDRESS IS DIFFERENT, COMPLETE BELOW

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms Forename
Surname
Address

Postcode/Zip code
Country
Mobile
Email

220 Triathlon (part of Kelsey Media) may contact you with promotions and special offers. You can opt-out or unsubscribe at any time**. Please let us know if you would prefer not to be contacted in this way.
☐ Email ☐ Post ☐ Phone. We will not pass your details on to third party companies.

PAY BY DIRECT DEBIT

☐ **I wish to subscribe by Direct Debit paying £19.97 for my first 6 issues. I understand that my subscription will continue at the rate of £44.99 with payments taken every 12 months – unless I write to you to tell you otherwise.**

DIRECT Debit

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Name of Bank
Address

Postcode
Account Name
Sort Code ☐☐☐☐☐☐ Acc. No ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐
Signature Date

Originator's ID number
| 8 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 8 | 3 |

Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Kelsey Publishing Ltd and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank or Building Society.

PAY BY CHEQUE / DEBIT / CREDIT CARD

☐ **UK CREDIT/DEBIT CARD (12 issues) £49.99 – saving 52%***
☐ **Please debit my:** ☐ Visa ☐ Visa Debit ☐ Mastercard
Card no ☐☐☐☐/☐☐☐☐/☐☐☐☐/☐☐☐☐
Security no ☐☐☐ Valid from / Expiry date /
Signature Date

☐ I enclose a cheque for £49.99 made payable to Kelsey Publishing Limited (must be from a UK bank account. Please write your name and address on the back of the cheque).

(UK ONLY) PLEASE SEND COMPLETED FORM TO: FREEPOST KELSEY MEDIA

Lines are open Mon-Fri 8.30am to 5.30pm. Calls are charged at your standard network rate. Offers available for UK customers only. *You will pay £19.97 for your first 6 issues then continue to pay £44.99 every 12 months. Savings are calculated based on the Basic Annual Rate using the standard cover price plus a standard postage price per issue. Offer ends 25/02/2026. Prices correct at time of print and subject to change. For full terms and conditions visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms. **To see how we use your data view our privacy policy here shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. You may unsubscribe at any time.

22TPG25B

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear reader,

Need some training and racing inspiration? Or fancy signing up for your first race in 2025? Whatever your targets, our one goal here at ***220 Triathlon*** magazine is to make sure you achieve them. In every issue we bring you the best training and racing advice, as well as all the cutting-edge kit you need to perform at your optimum. And, for a limited time you can try your first six issues for just £19.97!

So don't delay, subscribe today!

Helen

Helen Webster, Editor

GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

- // Every issue delivered directly to your door
- // Save up to £32 on your first 6 issues
- // Continue to save 57% every 12 months
- // Guarantee you never miss an issue
- // Receive the FREE 220 Triathlon E-newsletter**

220 TRIATHLON
SWIM. BIKE. RUN. *FASTER!*

SUBSCRIBE TO 220 TRIATHLON & SAVE UP TO £32

220 TRIATHLON
SWIM. BIKE. RUN. FASTER!
TRAIN LIKE JAVIER GOMEZ
Lessons in racing from the 70.3 champ as he begins his coaching career
THE FUTURE OF TRI?
The unique training camp doing things differently
HOW TO GAIN THE EDGE IN OPEN WATER
Easy ways to swim smarter.
33 WAYS TO BOOST ENDURANCE
PLUS
2025 RACE CALENDAR
HEALTHY TAKEAWAYS
DRAFT-LEGAL DUATHLON

~~£52.44~~

£19.97

for the first 6 months

ADVICE
EVENTS
GEAR TESTS
NUTRITION
TRAINING PLANS

SCAN ME

3 EASY WAYS TO SUBSCRIBE

Visit **shop.kelsey.co.uk/22TPG25B** Call on **01959 543 747** and quote **22TPG25B**

Complete the **FREEPOST** coupon opposite

Lines are open Mon-Fri 8.30am to 5.30pm. Calls are charged at your standard network rate.

THE GOAT-IN-WAITING

She's a three-time 70.3 world champion, a two-time Olympic relay silver medallist and the reigning T100 world champion – it can only be Taylor Knibb. Here, the US star tells us about the two coaches who have transformed her as an athlete and person, why 100K is the perfect distance for her, and why she needs two books on the go at all times... ▸

INTERVIEW LIZ BARRETT **IMAGES** T100 AND GETTY IMAGES

T100

TOMMY ZAFERES WORLD TRIATHLON

▲ Taylor Knibb in the Olympics individual triathlon 2024 in Paris.

Few triathletes have sparked quite as much attention as pro Taylor Knibb. The Ivy League-educated, Washington DC native, whose mother was an age-group long-distance world champion, started competing in swim, bike and run when she was 15. Her progression in the sport was swift, winning three world titles over the next five years.

Known as much for her bike strength as her often hilarious, straight-shooting press interviews, 27-year-old Knibb now boasts a hugely impressive podium-finishes-to-race-starts ratio, with several jaw-dropping performances that will be studied by generations of budding tri stars for years to come.

For example, when she finished second at the 2017 WTS Edmonton, to become the youngest podium finisher in World Triathlon history at just 19; when she won the 2021 World Triathlon Grand Final in Edmonton, beating short-course legend Flora Duffy and riding more than 2:30mins quicker than the entire field; when she finished almost 17mins ahead of five-time world Ironman champion Daniela Ryf at the 2021 Collins Cup; when she took fourth place in her full-distance debut – at the 2023 Ironman Worlds in Kona; or when she won four T100s from four starts to be crowned inaugural T100 champion in 2024.

Knibb is poised for another podium-topping season. At the end of April she raced her second-ever Ironman, in Texas, finishing runner-up to GB's Kat Matthews (whose 8:10:34 was, for five weeks, a new women's Ironman world record). The result secured Knibb a return ticket to Hawaii in October, which, along with the defence of both her 70.3 and T100 titles, in November and December respectively, are the three career-defining targets in her season's crosshairs. Could she make tri history? Don't doubt it for a second.

220: Congratulations on last season. What was your biggest take home from 2024? What did it teach you about yourself as an athlete?

TK: Thank you. I think I'm still processing and learning from all that I was fortunate enough to experience in 2024. One big takeaway for me though is that I still have so much to learn and work on.

220: Which of your many great race performances stands out to you? And why?

TK: Last year, I would say that my best race was the USA Cycling Time Trial Nationals in Charleston, WV. It was the race that probably surprised me the most (positively) and is one of my favourite memories of 2024.

220: Much had been made about you going head-to-head with Kat Matthews in Texas. How do you process that kind of media attention? Is it beneficial in any way in how you approach the race?

TK: I was very intrigued why so much attention was being given. While Ironman Texas was in both of our

Paris relays silver medalist with Team US (Knibb far left in photo).

JANOS SCHMIDT WORLD TRIATHLON

race schedules, it served very different purposes in our overall season goals and plans. Kat's goal is the Ironman Pro Series and she wants a perfect score, thus a win in Texas was necessary for that. My goals this season are Kona, 70.3 Worlds and the T100 Series. But in order to race Kona, I needed to qualify. So, my team and I chose Texas for the relatively minimal travel and early-season timing there were back-up options in case it didn't go to plan).

It's tough to explain nuance, especially to the media. I'm the only one who can set and define my goals and what success is. For me, it was a fantastic opportunity to get to line up with Kat and see where I am currently against one of the best athletes at the distance in the world. It's great, honest feedback.

220: Tell us more about your work with movement specialist Lawrence van Lingen.

TK: I first met Lawrence three years ago. He would come to Boulder every couple of weeks and treat a number of athletes there. My strength coach, Erin Carson, introduced the two of us. She said she thought that he could play an integral role in my career and she was most definitely entirely accurate.

I lucked out tremendously: in June of 2023, Lawrence moved to Boulder, which most definitely changed the trajectory of my career. In the past two years, he's helped me get to many start lines that I wouldn't have been able to otherwise. And I've been transformed as an athlete and person – how I approach and see training and the world and life in general.

I don't want to jinx anything, but the combination of Lawrence and Dan [Lorang] have allowed me to, step-by-step, regain some consistency in my run training. I think if you look at the path/trajectory I was potentially heading down in 2021, 2022, and the start of 2023, it just was not going to end well. I could not see it in the moment. But now I can. In the 10 months between 1 June 2022 and 1 April 2023, I took off at least seven months from running. If people knew how many MRIs I got from the time I moved to Boulder (January 2021) and September 2023, they would be horrified.

I would say that his approach just makes sense on so many levels. When you feel it in your body, you just know. Probably most importantly, it's who Lawrence is as a person. He's incredibly wise, patient, intelligent, and kind. I feel so incredibly privileged and grateful to work with him.

220: And the same question, but with regards Dan Lorang and his guidance.

TK: I started working with Dan in November 2023. I had gone into Kona 2023 without a coach and I feel very fortunate that Dan was willing to take a chance and work with me.

Dan has also completely transformed my training and approach to it. He has a very specific reason for why we do each thing that we do. I'm very grateful that I can always ask why we're doing something and he will always answer it thoughtfully and thoroughly. His approach is very step-by-step based and it also just makes so much sense. We're about 18 months into working together, and I'm still excited when he loads up my upcoming week's training to see what I get to do.

Dan is very smart in terms of knowing what to prescribe for workouts. But probably more importantly, he knows that athletes are humans not machines and he listens. That mix is incredibly rare and powerful. And most importantly, he's also an incredible person – so thoughtful, grounded, smart, a wonderful mix of both humble and confident, and quite joyous. I've learned so ▸

WAGNER ARAÚJO/WORLD TRIATHLON

▲ On the podium in Edmonton 2017 in the junior champs.

A day in the life

Taylor has very kindly provided two days' worth of 'life' for us to nosy over...

Example Saturday:
6:40am: Wake-up, followed by breakfast and reading (my non-fiction book)
7:35am: Depart for the pool
8-9:15am: Swim (4-5km), quality
Drive from pool to track
9:45am: Pre-run
10-11:30am: Run workout
Go home, shower, eat, and relax
3-5pm: Easy ride
Get home, shower, prep dinner
~5:45 pm: Eat dinner
Then rest/relax, maybe an evening walk
In bed by 8pm, lights off by 8:30/9pm

Example Sunday:
6:30am: Wake up, followed by breakfast and reading (my non-fiction book)
7:25-7:45am: Pre-run
7:45-7:55am Drive to run
8:00-9:45am: Long run
Drive home, shower, eat
11:15am: Head out for ride, recently with intervals (e.g. 4:15hr ride with 3 x 45mins)
~3:30 pm: Get home, shower, change, have snack (and/or meal)
5:30-6pm: Eat dinner
Then rest/relax, maybe an evening walk
In bed by 8pm, lights off by 8:30/9pm

Ironman Texas saw Knibb test herself alongside GB's Kat Matthews in a stellar line-up.

GETTY IMAGES/JAMIE SQUIRE

much from him on so many levels. I'm super thankful to get to work with him and I have the utmost trust in him.

220: Talk us through your training set-up.
TK: I live in Boulder, Colorado, and for the most part, with the exception of travelling for races, I'm here. I have a fantastic swim group that I get to train with. But then I do most of my cycling on my own and Lawrence joins me for many of my key runs.

220: What motivates you to get you up in the morning and train?
TK: Honestly, I get this question a lot and I have never had a good answer for it. Most days, I am super excited to wake up and get to do what I get to do. Now I will say, it's tremendously liberating for me to have a coach to prescribe what I need to do each day. It reduces the amount of thinking and then it defines when I'm done (otherwise I would always want to do more).

A few weeks ago, I came across this quote from Naval Ravikant about the liberation of a job you love: "When you truly work for yourself, you won't have hobbies, you won't have weekends, and you won't have vacations, but you won't have work either."

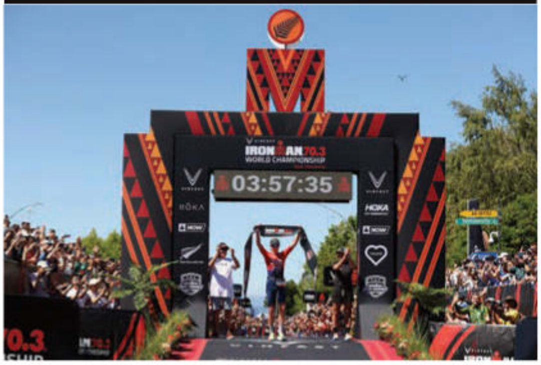
220: What do you do in your downtime to relax and switch off from training? What keeps you grounded?
TK: I read a fair amount. I like to be reading both a fiction and a non-fiction book at all times. For some reason, it really relaxes me and allows me to switch off from training. I also like to spend time with friends and family. I'm grateful to have many amazing people in my life who are incredibly honest with me and give great perspective. Staying at home and in my routine helps keep me grounded.

Taylor's career highlights

The incredible race stats of one of tri's greatest athletes. And just think, she's still only 27...

3 x Ironman 70.3 World Champion (2022, 2023, 2024)
2024 T100 champion
2 x Olympic mixed relay silver medallist (Tokyo 2020, Paris 2024)
4th, 2023 Ironman World Champs (also her Ironman debut)
3rd overall, 2022 World Triathlon Championship Series
2nd overall, 2021 World Triathlon Championship Series
2018 World Triathlon U23 Champion
2 x World Triathlon Junior Champion (2016, 2017)

Taking the Ironman 70.3 World Champs title in Taupo, New Zealand in 2024.



GETTYIMAGES FOR IRONMAN

"Despite everything that happened that day, I fell further in love with the time trial"

▲ Knibb taking part in the Paris 2024 time trial event.

220: A year on from Paris, how have you processed your three race days [Taylor raced the cycling time-trial, individual triathlon and the mixed team relay]?
TK: I have dedicated a lot of time and energy and thought to processing those days. They're done and can never be changed. But what I've thought about a lot is how I want to move forward and what I want to do. It's also two different sports to consider. With cycling, despite everything that happened that day [Taylor crashed several times in wet conditions and suffered a mechanical before finishing 19th], I fell further in love with the time trial. It's an amazing discipline and event.

But after the triathlon, I initially felt liberated because I realised that I never had to line up for another short-course race again if I did not want to. It was a drastically

GETTY IMAGES

POTTER
GBR
KNIBB
USA
Taylor Knibb (right) giving everything in the Paris relays.

WAGNER ARAUJO:WORLD TRIATHLON

different reaction. So, the question is: do I want to line up again? And why? And then there's a huge difference between merely lining up to a singular short-course race again and wanting to try and qualify for LA – and trying to be competitive there.

I am definitely always going to have a lot of disappointment surrounding those days and what happened [she also finished 19th in the individual race, but took silver in the mixed relay]. It would be an issue if I didn't, given everything that so many people on my team and I invested. I have found a level of acceptance and peace with the days, which is I think the best I can hope/ask for.

I really did not enjoy my experience in Paris as a whole. The Olympics, for me, are highly stressful and unpleasant. I definitely have worked to consider my relationship with the Olympics as an event. I needed to if I ever want to go back. I definitely learned a lot.

220: What are your least and most favourite training sessions and why?
TK: I trust Dan's plan immensely. Big picture, I love every training session that is a part of that plan and then a session that deviates from that plan (without Dan's intention/planning due to feedback from me on how training is going and I'm doing) – whether it's too hard/easy relative to the intention or it's in addition or skipped – is my least favourite.

220: What is it about T100 racing that suits you so well do you think?
TK: That's a good question. I think the 20m drafting rule on the bike cannot go unacknowledged. It's a great blend of short- and long-course racing. I think there are some skills that I've learned from short-course racing that I get to use – like swim dynamics, the looped-course format, dealing with the traveling, etc. and then there are some other skills from 70.3 racing that I get to use (like the race distance, time trial biking, etc.). I also think that at this point in my career/development, the distances across swim, bike, and run are pretty perfect for me.

220: What did you make of Singapore T100 [Taylor sat it out due to "personal reasons"]?
TK: I definitely looked it up and am aware of the results, but I didn't watch the whole race. Kate Waugh was incredibly impressive. [After we spoke to Knibb, she would race San Francisco T100 at the end of May, where she finished second behind first-time winner, Julie Derron (SUI). Despite her first 'loss' over the 100k since she posted another second at the PTO US Open in 2022, Knibb was pleased with her performance: "I feel like I'm just missing a few gears but it's early season and I'm grateful to be here and racing. I'll take it. I have a lot of work to do and that shows, but I'm thrilled for Julie and I'm looking forward to the rest of the season." Two weeks later she won Vancouver T100.]

220: If you could steal any triathlete's skills, whose and what would you choose and why?
TK: I wouldn't want to do that; whatever skills another athlete has they've developed and earned themselves. I will continue working to better my capabilities. **220**

MIND THE *(GENDER)* GAP

Do women get an equal experience in triathlon..? A report published at the end of last year offered some hard-hitting truths. But having shaken the tri world awake, the two organisations behind the survey have already ushered in some incredible changes. Here's how, as well as a look at the work still to be done...

WORDS LIZ BARRETT **IMAGES** GETTY IMAGES

In December 2024 a report was released by two organisations, SheRACES and Women in Tri UK, entitled 'Closing the gender gap: tackling the underrepresentation of women in triathlon'. The results and testimony from over 900 female triathletes, who contributed to the survey and shared their real-life experiences of events in the UK and around the world, shocked the global tri community.

The statistics, such as 'only 3% of athletes reported neither being deterred from entering a race (for reasons other than cost), nor experiencing inequitable provision as a woman', were stark. Others, while less surprising, still made for uncomfortable reading – '67% of women are put off entering triathlon events due to the cost' and '57% of respondents have experienced insufficient toilet provisions at races'.

Then there was this – 28% of female triathletes in the survey reported having experienced physical or verbal harassment at a race. Just read that again. Out of 900 women that equals 252. Almost a third.

The report quoted women who had suffered verbal harassment, such as being shouted at to move, comments about their body, clothing or ability, and race marshals and other participants making inappropriate or sexual comments. Physical harassment and abuse included being pushed and shoved, inappropriate and unwanted touching/hugging, and dangerously close overtaking when cycling. One respondent even described being spat at during the run by a male competitor.

In short, the 63-page report had a clear message – the female experience in triathlon needed to change and, in order for the sport to thrive and grow, it needed to change now. But where to start? The report (which can be downloaded in full at sheraces.com) highlighted so many different areas where the sport was falling short for women at all levels. ▸

As well as the shocking level of inappropriate behaviour taking place, which we will return to later, on a more logistical level there was a huge list of 'barriers' to entry, such as the high cost of race entry and kit, lack of logistical information, no option to defer entry for pregnancy, daunting cut-off times, unisex t-shirts in goody bags that are not designed for the female body, the lack of private changing, and no female-only wave or race options.

What the women behind the survey and report want to make clear here, though, is that a lot of work is already being done, and had been going on for years behind the scenes.

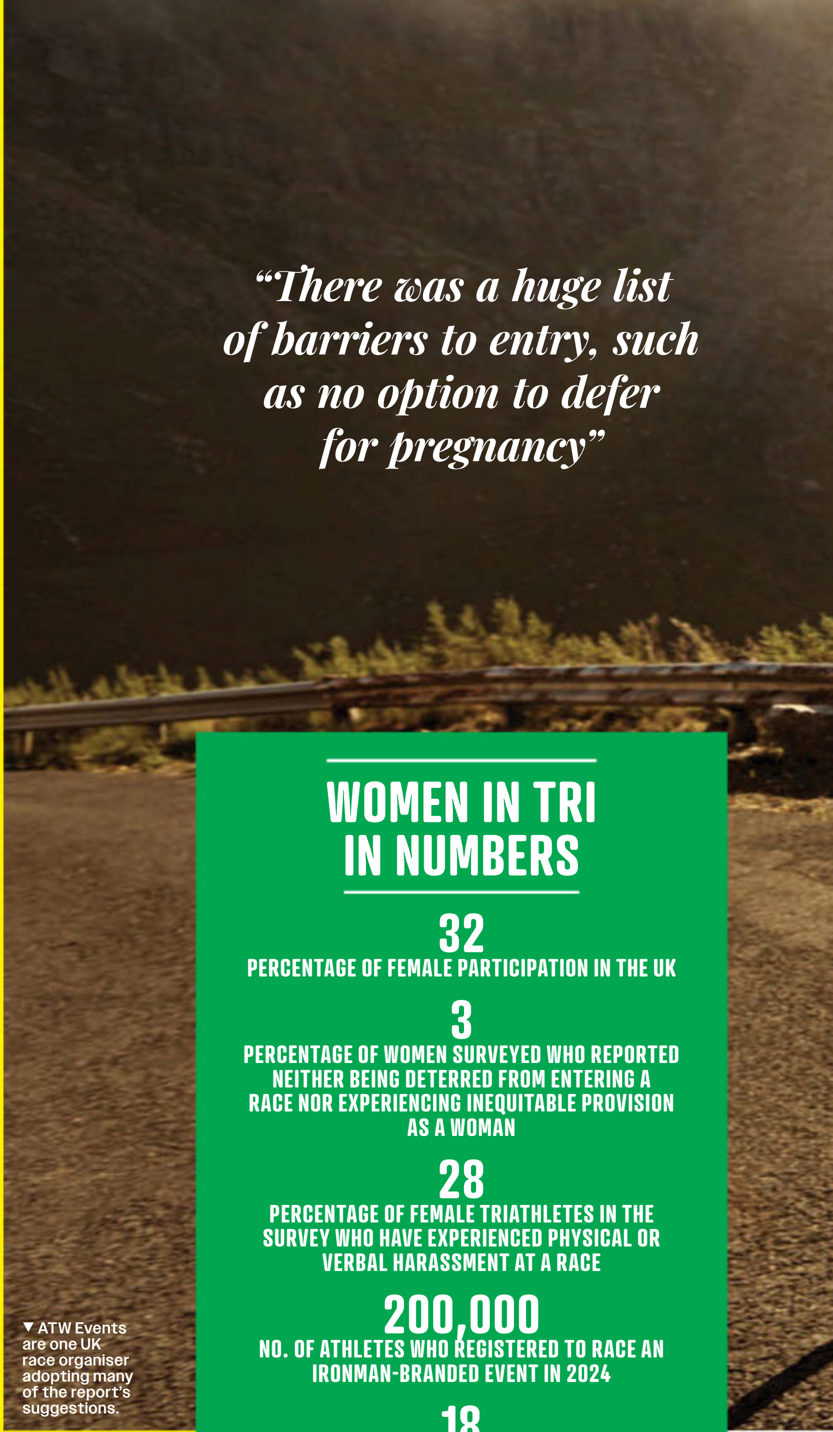
"I've been doing a lot of advocacy with events for many, many years, raising awareness with things like not having period products or snapping swim caps due to my afro hair," explains **Bianca Fernandez-Clark**, (pictured left) founder and chair of Women in Tri UK. "We have so many success stories from events before the report was published."

Women in Tri UK has an Event Partnerships Scheme, which any event can join and which already had a huge sign-up.

"We work with events end-to-end providing bespoke advice, to help make races better for women and beginners. It's something we've always done, but now with a proper structure – plus, our event partners wanted (and deserve!) recognition for the work they're doing. Each event can use our logo on their website to say that they're an official partner to us and that means that they have intentional action around increasing women's participation.

"We have extensive guidelines, but we will go to an event and chat to them about say how is the swim managed. That's what we've been doing for years, but now we're going to new events. So a lot is work we've already been doing, based on the deep feedback that we've had from the community."

Outlaw events have been a partner of Women in Tri UK for several years, and they continue to work



> *"There was a huge list of barriers to entry, such as no option to defer for pregnancy"*

▼ ATW Events are one UK race organiser adopting many of the report's suggestions.

LEIGHTON BUZZARD
39
LEIGHTON BUZZARD
24

WOMEN IN TRI IN NUMBERS

32
PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN THE UK

3
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN SURVEYED WHO REPORTED NEITHER BEING DETERRED FROM ENTERING A RACE NOR EXPERIENCING INEQUITABLE PROVISION AS A WOMAN

28
PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE TRIATHLETES IN THE SURVEY WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED PHYSICAL OR VERBAL HARASSMENT AT A RACE

200,000
NO. OF ATHLETES WHO REGISTERED TO RACE AN IRONMAN-BRANDED EVENT IN 2024

18
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WHO PARTICIPATED IN AN IRONMAN (FULL DISTANCE) IN 2024

40
PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE ENDURANCE ATHLETES SURVEYED BY IRONMAN WHO AGREED THAT 'INCREASING VISIBILITY IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING WE CAN DO TO GROW FEMALE PARTICIPATION'

52
PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE REPRESENTATION ON BRITISH TRIATHLON'S OLYMPIC PROGRAMME AHEAD OF PARIS 2024

SOURCES: SHERACES SURVEY – 'HOW CAN WE MAKE RACING BETTER FOR WOMEN?', TRIATHLON INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION, IRONMAN, BRITISH TRIATHLON

▲ Safety on the bike leg is one area highlighted by the survey.

together to implement change.

"Their [SheRACES and Women in Tri UK] insights have helped us implement meaningful changes that go beyond the standard commitments," explains Lia Hamilton from Wasserman, who run the Outlaw events. "For example, introducing modesty-friendly changing areas has led to a huge increase in participation from Muslim women."

IMPLEMENTING CHANGE

Cost continues to be a huge barrier to participation, for both genders, but several races, including Outlaw, now offer payment plans, discounted entry for clubs and early-bird price structuring to help spread the cost.

"The idea of a 'no-frills' entry is an interesting one, too," adds Hamilton, "particularly for athletes who already have the kit or prefer a more sustainable approach, and it's something we're continuing to keep in mind. Affordability and accessibility are key to growing the sport, and we're always looking for ways to support that."

ATW Events is another partner who have adopted many of the suggestions provided by Women in Tri UK, such as enhancing their pre-race information and FAQs and providing clearer details on logistics and expected finish times.

"We've also introduced female-only start waves and, where feasible, rolling starts to provide a more comfortable race environment," says managing director James Shipley. "Our extensive deferral policy allows any participant to defer up to 48 hours before the event for any reason, including pregnancy, without any questions asked. Additionally, all our sprint and standard-distance races have no cut-off times.

Some changes, of course, are easier to implement than others. "One of my athletes raced an aquathlon in France and she was the third female finisher and they did not have medals for the women," recalls British Triathlon coach and Women in Tri UK advisor Jo Watkinson. "They only had medals for first, second and third, which inevitably were all men. It's a very, very low cost to have two sets of medals, that's a very easy-to-manage change.

"Things that change the whole logistical layout of your transition, say getting a portable loo into transition, is going to be logistically very difficult," says Watkinson. "But things like the medals or sourcing female fit T-shirts rather than unisex T-shirts are easy and that shows they're thinking about their female participants." ▶

THIS IS ALL COMMERCIAL

Back in 2022, SheRACES conducted the first large-scale survey into female experiences in road and trail run races. Over 2,000 women took part, and from the results guidelines were developed for race organisers to use to become more inclusive.

“When we worked with Threshold Sports last year on the 50:50 project, we showed that a 1.5% increase in event costs to implement these guidelines resulted in 98% more women on the startline,” says founder of SheRACES **Sophie Power** (pictured right).

“And the number of men doubled, it was a more attractive race to sign up to. It’s a kind of double bonus that the event is going to make more money and women get a better experience to race. Because this is all commercial. If you’ve got very few women on the start line and you want to grow your events the best thing to do is get more women.”

JOHN DAVIS

SheRACES then switched their attention to triathlon, writing the tri-specific guidelines that outline best practice for all events to be inclusive to women, which, says Power, “makes triathlon better for everyone – men benefit from steps towards inclusion too”.

Triathlons that meet the minimum nine commitments for female-inclusive races can take the additional step of becoming SheRACES accredited, highlighting their commitment to getting more women to the start line and giving them a good experience when they get there.

SHOCKING TESTIMONIES

As with any report it’s hard to get a real feel for the ‘experience’ of those who contributed from a set of emotionless statistics, so it was the first-person accounts of abusive and inappropriate behaviour during races that really caught people’s attention.

“Coming out of the swim at London Tri a couple of years ago,” recalls Watkinson, “I had a man physically climb over me because I was waiting for the person in front to get themselves onto the pontoon. And the guy behind me used me as a ladder. I don’t care if I’m a man or a woman, no one should be using another human as a ladder.”

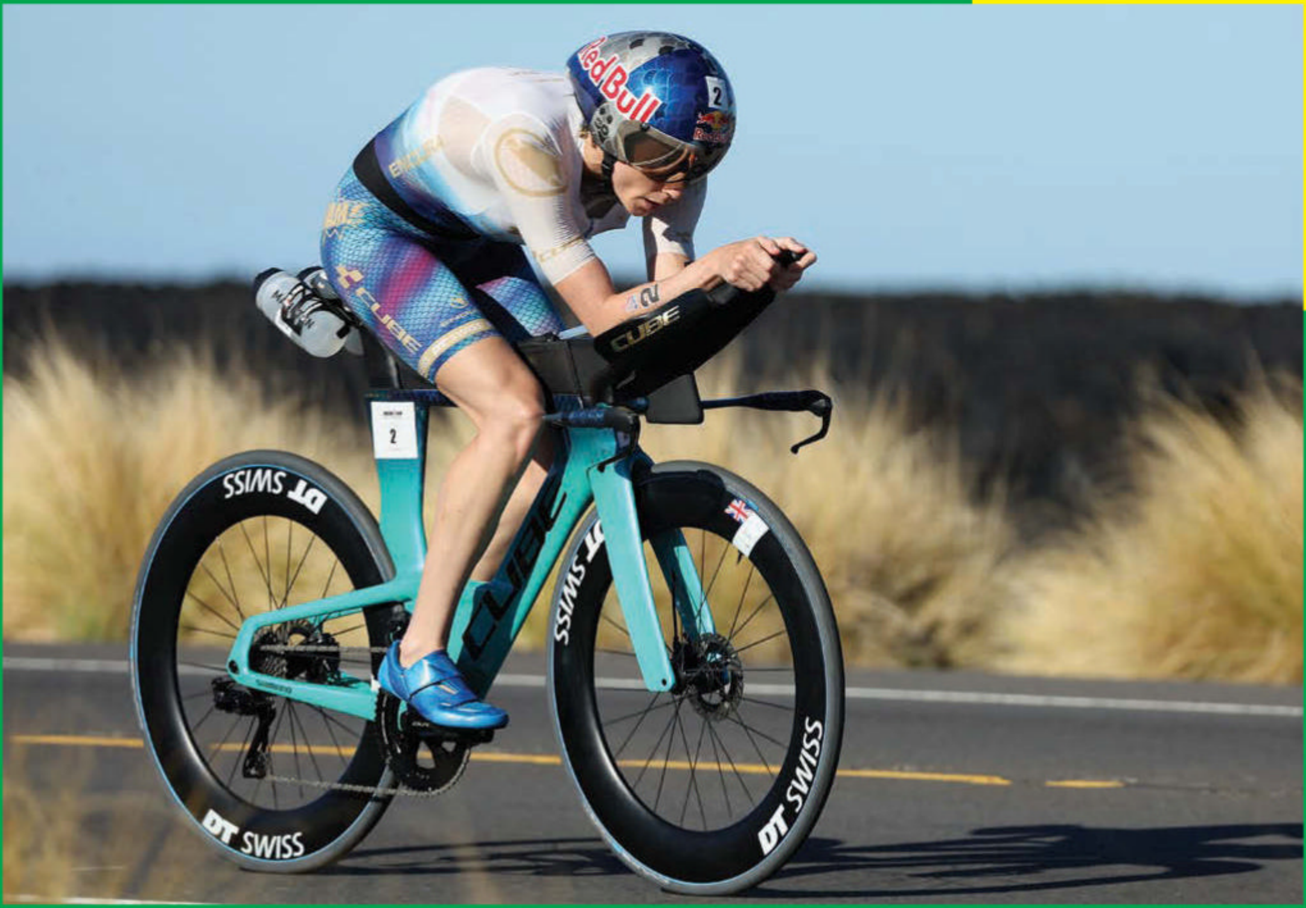
“I had a terrible experience at Challenge Roth last year,” adds Fernandez-Clark. “A man would not stop running literally next to me, for 5k, and on a section of the canal that’s quite lonely, there was nobody. I would speed up and he’d speed up with me. I’d slow down and he’d slow down. I’d take a walk break, nothing would get him out of my way until I stopped and pretended to do my shoelaces so he would just piss off. I’m from the Dominican Republic, I know crime, so I’m not spooked easily and I was so spooked because you’re not seeing anyone until the aid stations every 5K. He just wrecked my race because I couldn’t even do my own effort, I was just so worried about this man.”

“I have validated a lot of experiences in triathlon that I thought were okay and normal, and ‘this is just triathlon racing’,” Fernandez-Clark continues. “And it wasn’t until other women said, ‘no, this is not okay’. So when I’ve experienced very dangerous close passing on the bike I never reported that. Or even considered it a form of harassment. So a code of conduct is something we ask all of our partners to implement.”

“What we’re questioning is, does our sport have to look that way?”, says Power. “Is it because it’s been

▲ ATW Events are aware of the need to show images of all types of athletes, not just the speediest men.

◀ Swim caps to accommodate afro hair are one simple change organisers can offer.



THE LONG-DISTANCE EXPERIENCE

Ironman received widespread consternation in spring when it announced changes to its world champs' qualifying system. But then Women in Tri UK stepped in…

Female participation in triathlon is 32% overall in the UK (source: Triathlon Industry Association), but this number drops dramatically as the distance increases, with men outnumbering women by more than 4:1 at Ironman events globally.

Back in April, the news broke that the Ironman World Champs would, from 2026, be returning to its original one-day format in Kona, Hawaii, meaning men and women would once again be sharing the stage rather than having two separate race days. The news was met with a mixed response. On the pro side, it was warmly received, with many women relishing the return to racing alongside the men. "I missed the feeling of being part of something bigger," posted 2023 champ Lucy Charles Barclay on her Instagram account.

But what about the age-groupers? Ironman had believed that the split-location format "would lead to greater exposure for all and more women participating in the sport of triathlon." However, according to Ironman, "it did not inspire more women to enter the sport, and did not increase the frequency of racing among women. In fact, the split-format unexpectedly resulted in more women leaving the sport after completing the Ironman World Championship".

One area that they're improving for 2026, and is something the survey also touched on, was giving equal coverage to the men's and women's races. Back in April, Ironman also announced that while the elite men and women would have an equal number of starting places, the age-group field would not, with slots instead being awarded "mainly proportionately", so more would be available to the most popular categories, e.g. 40-44 men. The news was disheartening to Fernandez-Clark and Power.

Pro athletes including Lucy Charles-Barclay welcome the chance to race on the same stage as men.

However, at the start of July, Ironman, having taken the findings of Women in Tri UK into account – which demonstrated how proportional allocation models can unintentionally penalise high-performing women due to lower participation numbers – announced that it would be adopting a new age-group performance-based qualification process for the Ironman and 70.3 World Champs. You can read the full news story on this on our website, 220triathlon.com.

"We're pleased to see Iroman take this important step forward," said Fernandez-Clark. "We hope this marks the beginning of a long-term collaboration to drive more equitable outcomes across the sport."

allowed to happen? Is it because historically we've had a majority of men on the start line? And can we create a new form of the sport that is not just inclusive to women but inclusive to male athletes as well?"

CHANGING MINDSETS

Unlike other barriers to entry or continuation in the sport, there's not a simple solution here. Or at least not a quick one. So how do you go about changing a person's mindset? And furthermore, how do you make a grown adult understand what is and isn't acceptable behaviour?

"You can't control who turns up at your event and what they do," admits Power. "And it's how you make that clear as to what's acceptable and what's not, when people have been doing sport for a long time.

"We've done a huge piece of work with Ourea Events, who have phenomenal safeguarding policies and have really developed that to understand 'how do we create that culture of respect between athletes?'. And if there are issues, how are they raised. There are ways to make the sport better and safer, and that's where British Triathlon really engaged brilliantly in sending the survey out."

British Triathlon was, like the rest of the triathlon community, taken aback by the results.

"The survey didn't represent what we understood women to be experiencing in our sport and the concerns raised by women completing this survey had not been shared with us," says British Triathlon's CEO Ruth Daniels. "We take a zero-tolerance approach to misogynistic behaviour at events or anywhere else in our sport and so one of the areas we identified where we could improve is in the routes available for people to report this kind of behaviour.

"We would always encourage women to raise issues at the time with technical officials or event directors. We also appreciate many women would not feel comfortable doing this and so encourage people to contact us via the concern@britishtriathlon.org email address or complete the form on our website."

More specifically, British Triathlon has launced anonymous reporting via a QR code, so that athletes can report any concerns, "including misogynistic behaviour and discrimination of any type".

The QR code links directly to a form where people can share their experience or concern confidentially. "We will be sharing this widely to encourage people to make us aware of these concerns and responses will be managed by our British Triathlon sports integrity team," says Daniels.

"Our current British Triathlon's Code of Ethics sets out the standards of behaviour we would expect from anyone taking part in our sport," adds Daneils. "We do have plans to review the Code later this year, alongside our overall organisational values, with the involvement of the triathlon community – we want this to be shaped and owned by them."

PUTTING POLICIES IN PLACE

Power believes British Triathlon can go further: "We think every race should have a safeguarding policy and an anti-harassment policy if they're going to get a licence. But it can't be just a policy, people need to be aware of the policy and that things will happen if you breach it. And that women, and men, who had issues know that their concerns will be listened to and addressed. It's a whole 360° that needs to happen. The research has brought awareness to the fact that it [harassment policy] needs to be in place.

"After all, triathlon is an amazing sport and everyone should have the opportunity to take part without fear and have a joyous day, and so many women have had days that are not joyous, and not because of their own athletic ability but because of other athlete behaviour.

"That was the big step back [with the results of the survey] in that there's an awful lot of work to do. There were a small number of experienced athletes that said "don't complain, we don't need extra help", and I think reframing this as it's not extra help to have period products. It's not extra help to have an harassment policy, it's not extra help to have proper facilities and to have our race equally valued.

"And I think for women to think that it's cheating or we're weaker because we want that, we're only asking for the race to be equally designed for us as it is for men. And it's something that we are paying our entry fee for and we're entitled to."

FIRST STEPS

With so many initiatives already in place, what else would SheRACES and Women in Tri UK like to see being implemented?

"We'd like to see more triathlons openly committing to the guidelines," says Power. "And firming up the accreditation which we know attracts women. We know that over 80% of women are more likely to sign up for a race that openly commits to the guidelines.

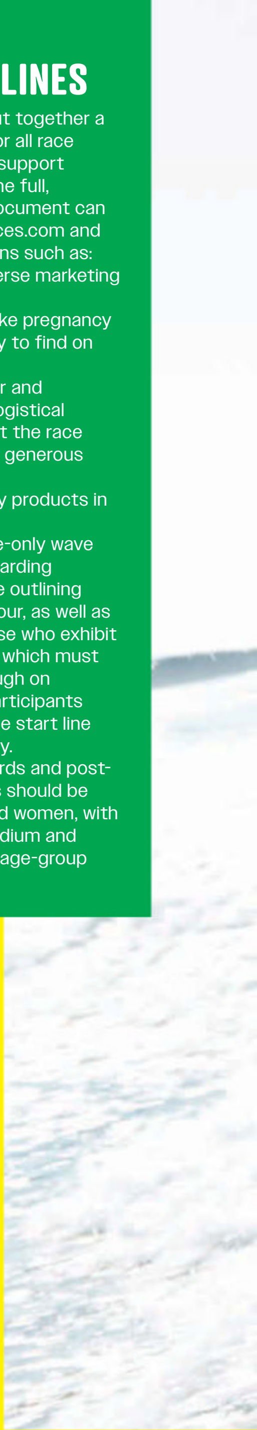
"Maybe event organisers can't make all the changes but we get the period products in, or they're aware of small things like language, like imagery – it'll often be things they just haven't thought of before. And once you see imagery that's wrong, you can't unsee it. If every homepage is all the fast men it's so off-putting.

"Some of the great feedback has been from male athletes who've heard these things said to women and they've not intervened. Or they've seen aggressive passing on the bike but not done anything. And they've

THE GUIDELINES

SheRACES have put together a set of guidelines for all race organisers to help support female athletes. The full, completely free, document can be found on sheraces.com and includes suggestions such as:

- Include more diverse marketing imagery
- Ensuring things like pregnancy deferrals are easy to find on race websites
- Provide very clear and comprehensive logistical information about the race
- Introducing more generous cut-off times
- Providing sanitary products in toilets
- Offering a female-only wave
- Put strict safeguarding protocols in place outlining expected behaviour, as well as penalties for those who exhibit poor behaviour – which must be followed through on
- Ensure that all participants have space on the start line with clear visibility.
- Prize money, awards and post-race celebrations should be equal for men and women, with the same size podium and same number of age-group categories.



▲ The swim is one area of racing many women reported feeling vulnerable.

said 'we're going to call it out', and that's so powerful."

For Watkinson, she's been encouraged by her fellow coaches' response to the results. "A lot of the male coaches weren't aware that this was the experience of female athletes. And so getting those results out in front of male coaches and male participants has really helped. And now it's trying to filter that message so it then goes back into the clubs.

"And at the tri club where I coach, the men have started calling the men out. So when they're trying to overtake in a small swim lane because the woman in front is faster than them, and the other guys are like, 'dude what you're doing?' I love seeing that. That is what actually I think will generate change in the harder-to-reach section of male triathlon society.

"Because I would also bet that the guy that used me as a ladder probably isn't going to read this article. So how can the media create articles, information in a way that is palatable to the male who needs to be aware that their bullying behaviour, regardless of whether it's a male or a female that they are overtaking too closely, is still unacceptable behaviour? How can we raise the standard of what athletes are doing when they are racing and training? The media essentially needs to be an ally, using their platform to educate males in the sport on what's okay and what isn't."

"Really small things can make a huge difference and that's what we're trying to get across," concludes Power. "There's a huge opportunity to get more women into triathlon and really safeguard the future of the sport. Races want to give their athletes a great experience and women want to be on startlines. And so all we're trying to do is ask the right questions and make some simple changes to grow the sport." 220

FIND OUT MORE

SheRACES

SheRACES relies on funding support to carry out important research and advocacy. To find out more about what they do and how to donate, visit sheraces.com or contact them about partnerships via **hello@sheraces.com**

Women in Tri UK

Women In Tri UK's mission is to bring gender parity to triathlon through a series of initiatives to help reduce some of the barriers faced at entry level. To find out more and donate visit: **womenintriuk.org**

220 BACK ISSUES & STORAGE

MISSED AN ISSUE?

ORDER ONLINE

shop.kelsey.co.uk/220BACKISSUE

01959 543 747*

*Lines open Monday-Friday 8:30am–5:30pm.
Overseas please call +44 (0) 1959 543747

STORE AND PROTECT YOUR COPIES!

Complete your *220 Triathlon* collection by ordering a back issue, and pick up an easy-to-store slipcase at the same time! There's no better way to house your collection and keep your favourite magazine in perfect condition.

shop.kelsey.co.uk/220BINDER
01959 543 747*

*Calls charged at your standard network rate. Pleases allow up 28 days for delivery. All purchases include a delivery charge.

KIT ZONE

THE LATEST GEAR – TESTED BY EXPERTS

MEET THE TEST TEAM

HELEN WEBSTER

220's editor is also a qualified open-water swimming coach.

ROB SLADE

220's content editor and resident adventure seeker.

MATT BAIRD

Has spent years testing tri kit and accessories for *220*.

KATE MILSOM

A keen athlete taking part in multisport and bike-packing.

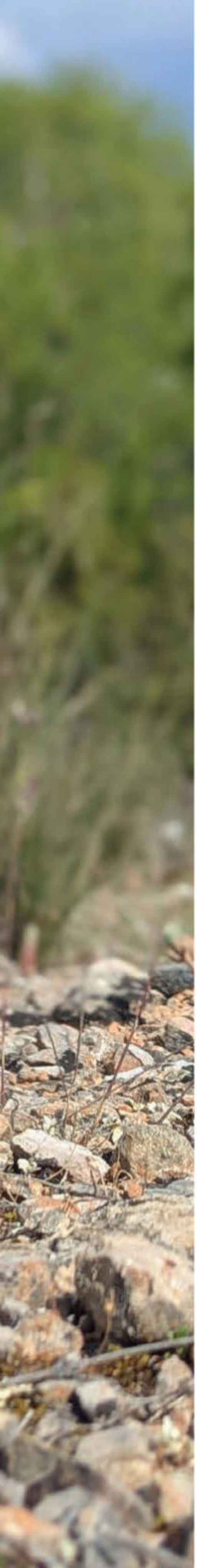
SARAH BROADLEY

Competes in 70.3 triathlons and is a qualified swim coach.

OUR RATINGS

0-49 %	**POOR**	SIMPLY PUT, DON'T BOTHER!
50-69 %	**AVERAGE**	IT'LL DO THE JOB WELL ENOUGH
70-79 %	**GOOD**	A DECENT PERFORMER
80-89 %	**IMPRESSIVE**	ONE OF THE BEST YOU CAN BUY
90+ %	**BUY NOW**	A GENUINE CLASS LEADER

“The sock-like tongue is super-soft and moulds to the foot”



ARC’TERYX
NORVAN LD4

£150 ★★★★½

Arc’Teryx is a brand known for being both stylish and functional, their running shoes typically built with top quality engineering. The Norvan LD4 is no exception, being Arc’Teryx’s newest long-distance trail shoe designed to inspire “confidence on training and adventure runs.”

As someone who spends more time on trails than tarmac and happily logs long, slow miles, the LD4’s adventure remit immediately appealed. In temperatures from 15°C to 35°C, I took the shoe out for a proper tour across the rolling Cotswold hills and sunny trails of southern France.

First up, the 4mm multidirectional lugs bite into wet mud with confidence and do an excellent job of quickly shedding claggy mud. Equally, they hold their own on dry, hard-packed trails, offering reliable traction and control.

Protection is where the LD4 really shines. The tight knit PFAS-free upper is tough and abrasion-resistant, flowing down into a rubber overlay up the sides for additional coverage. While a rigid toe-bumper has saved me from a few black nails on the trail and roomy toe-box allows space for toes to splay and swell during longer runs.

A unique selling point to the LD4 is the sock-like tongue, which is super soft and moulds well to the foot. That being said, its flexibility can make putting on the shoes a faff as the tongue tends to bunch. Once in though, the fit is dialled, and the subtle lace pocket works well.

Underfoot, the Vibram Megagrip Litebase outsole is built to take a beating. It’s stiff and stable in the heel for rock protection, with some flex in the forefoot for a solid toe-off. I personally like the sleek monotone colour ways, with plenty of options including orange, pink, beige, and yellow, plus blue for men.

Cushioning hits a sweet spot for long-distance efforts thanks to the medium-firm foam with 25mm/19mm stack, which offers comfortable shock-absorption over tarmac and trail. There’s a noticeable absence of propulsion, but then LD4 is not built for speed, but for big, long days out. **KM**

arcteryx.com

90 % **VERDICT** A versatile and reliable long-distance trail shoe that performs over all terrains

HEAD TO HEAD TEST
RUNNING SUNGLASSES

GOODR OGs

£30 ★★★★☆

The two pairs of sunnies on test this issue couldn't be more different in style – though they're both targeted at the running market. First up are Goodr, who have been on the scene for a few years now with their cheerful range of glasses with fun colours and unusual names.

These are the OGs – launched first – and from memory these must be the fourth pair of these I've had. Granted I'm not the best at carefully storing my sunnies, but I have found previously that the lenses are quite easy to damage on the mirrored versions I've owned before.

The colourway here is quite understated for Goodr with a tortoiseshell frame and brown lenses (style name: 'Bosley's Basset Hound Dreams') and they come in a cardboard box with a soft fabric cloth/case which feels like good value for the £30 price tag.

On the face and these are very comfortable and live up tot the claims Goodr make about staying put throughout each run. Once on and no matter how sweaty things get, they don't budge at all!

The lenses were a very warm amber tint which really made everything look quite enhanced, though they did a good job of bringing out contrast and clarity when running in dappled woods. That is no doubt helped by the fact they're polarised, which did come as a pleasant surprise for the price point.

All in these are a great set of budget sunnies if you want to go from running to daily wear without looking too 'sporty', though runners targeting long distances may want to look right... **HW** *goodr.co.uk*

80 %

VERDICT Budget sunnies with polarised lenses and a casual look.

SUNGOD FORTY2s

£110 ★★★★★

No quirky names here – the Forty2s from fast-rising brand Sungod are all about performance. That name is taken from the number of kilometres in a marathon, which gives a clear nod to the intent of these. Designed with running in mind, there was a clear design brief here!

Like the Goodr sunnies these come in an eco-friendly cardboard box, with a microfibre cloth bag which is here made from recycled plastic bottles. Pulling them from the packaging though, the look and feel of them is completly different. Whereas on the Goodr ones you can see the chunky frames as you run, here the wraparound shape with frameless bottoms allows for more of your eyes to be be covered. Looking down and to each side as I run, the lenses do a great job of covering my line of vision without restriction.

These are very lightweight at just 28g and once on, didn't move around at all as I ran. You also get three nose bridges in the package to help achieve the perfect fit. The hinges are also screw-free with a pop-lock design, to avoid rusting.

The lenses are the important thing and here Sungod have used their 8KO nylon lenses which are 2mm thick and engineered to provide superior clarity as well as shatterproof protection. The tint here is more of a grey tone but in use it actually kept colours true, blocking glare without changing the hue of my surroundings.

I liked the look of these, too. They felt engineered for running, without being so big I felt daft being out and about in them! **HW** *sungod.co*

92 %

VERDICT Higher price point, but for serious runs a top product.

GEAR NEWS

Form release 'Pro' version of popular Smart Swim 2 goggles with new Gorilla Glass lenses.

The Smart Swim goggles from revolutionary brand Form have been around since 2020 now, when I was lucky enough to be one of the first to test them. Since then the Smart Swim 2 added new features and an improved design and these strange looking goggles have become a common sight in pool training sessions – their augmented reality training screen which 'floats' inside one lens making it easy to follow sessions and track performance.

So what's new in 2025? As we were about to go to print with this issue these new 'Smart Swim 2 Pro' goggles arrived at my door. I wasn't able to fully test the new features in time for this issue (a full review will appear at a later date in these pages and at 220triathlon.com) but it's enough for now to share what's coming up.

The major change is the addition of new lenses here. Made from lightweight and chemically-strengthened Gorilla Glass 3, they promise to deliver enhanced scratch and damage resistance as well as enhancing optical quality and providing a UPF rating of 50+, blocking 98 percent of harmful UV rays. This new version also come with an anti-fog solution which is user-applied before each swim.

Form will also be releasing new Premium training features this summer to include new HeadCoach plans, insights and Smart Sets.

The Form Smart Swim 2 Pro goggles will cost £279 with Premium app access at £8.25 a month. **HW** *formswim.com*

THE MAGIC5 WATER SAFETY BUOY

£33.60 ★★★★½

The Magic5 is a brand name you might be familiar with from the pages of 220, as their custom-fit goggles have revolutionised swim eyewear in recent years (see 220triathlon.com for our reviews). Here though is something a little different, though no less practical.

This tow float (billed as a water safety buoy here) is bright pink in colour for maximum visibility and features a slimline shape, nifty drybag compartment and redesigned strap.

I have to admit I think tow floats are a great idea, but using them has often left me frustrated by a lack of streamlining (especially in choppy water) and belts and straps that tangle and work themselves free.

Using The Magic5's version was a pleasant surprise though. First up is that strap. Rather than the usual plastic clip which you feed the strap though to adjust, here a metal hook is pulled through a choice of loops to get the perfect – and secure – fit. It's tricky to push through, but that means it does stay put!

The drybag compartment extends the length of the buoy, but once inflated I found the top part (which you roll down) a handy option for small essentials like energy gels on long swims, making them easily accessible but tucked away enough not to create drag.

In use, this buoy did a good job of streamling and bobbing behind me as I swam. Ok so in high winds it did occasionally give me a bop, but on the whole it was pretty well-behaved and better than others I've used in the past. **HW** *themagic5.com*

87%

VERDICT Taking a product and adding some thoughtful design tweaks to improve it.

KOSTÜME
WOMEN'S CARGO BIB SHORTS

£TBC ★★★★★

Artists? Environmentalists? Ultra distance cyclists? It appears that Bristol-based Kostüme have arrived in the market with a bold vision to make premium, long distance cycle wear with minimal impact on the environment so I was excited to try the Women's Cargo Bib shorts.

The shorts feel premium straight out of the packaging. Made from an Oeko-Tex certified Econyl regenerated Nylon they sit snugly on the skin but you can hardly feel they are there. True to size, with elastic-free raw cut legs and a lovely height and finish to the waist band, they provide excellent comfort.

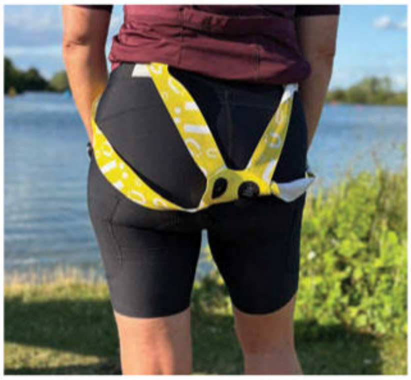
The design is minimalist and sleek with bright contrast yellow colour on the inside of the straps - a fun and conversation-starting alternative to the more conventional design. The straps allow for a seat drop comfort break - no zips, no clips - just drop and pee. Better still, the pockets have been moved to the legs so no accidental drowning of the phone down the pan when using this feature!

In keeping with the sleek design the pockets are neat and almost invisible when not in use but deep, secure and easily accessible when required. The chamois is cool and comfortable thanks to the four-layer aloe-infused pad and has held its shape and cushioning throughout a month of washing and wearing during testing.

If the quality and value aren't enough, you can add their responsible production method as another reason to purchase these fabulous shorts. The small batch, pre-order model minimises waste which Kostume advise means more investment in creating beautiful, functional pieces for us to enjoy when exploring the world on two wheels. **SB** *kostume.cc*

98 %

VERDICT Thoughtfully-designed shorts from a new brand which have considered the needs of female cyclists.



GROUNDTRUTH 25L ROLL TOP DRY BACKPACK

£215 ★★★★☆

Crafted from recycled materials and designed with dive experts Padi, this dry bag is one for those who are serious about keeping their kit dry (or keeping their wet kit off things that are dry!). The 25-litre capacity is huge and can easily swallow up any stinky kit you might have at the end of a triathlon, or day out open-water swimming, cycling or hitting the trails. It's rugged too and felt pretty much indestructable in testing (though I can't say I went about trying to hurt it, it stood up very well to being thrown in and out of vans on my travels!).

Rolling the top down makes it so waterproof it can be submerged. While we may not need to do that, it's certainly handy for keeping kit dry during brick sessions or swims where you need to leave kit out to the elements yet ensure you come back to it dry.

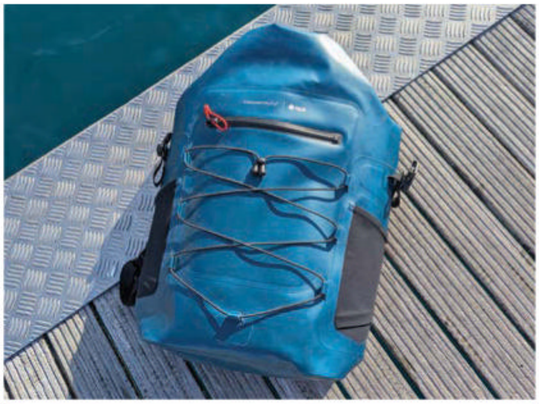
Additional features include front webbing, bottle holder, a waterproof zipped front pocket and bungee. The rear backpack straps are padded and comfortable to wear, while a small middle strap on the back allows you to put the bag on the handle of a suitcase for easy travelling.

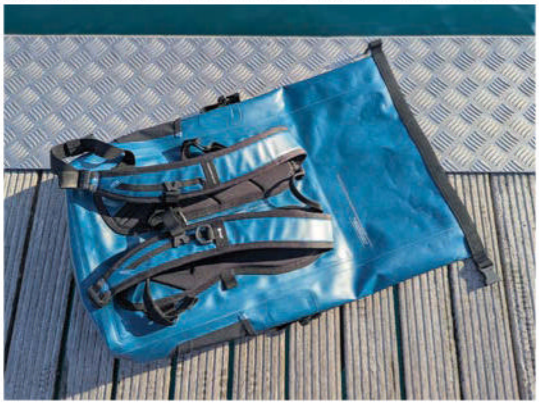
What's really nifty is the additional 'day tote' included with the bag (also sold seperately for £70) which is a padded insert complete with handles and laptop sleeve that can be removed from the bag if need be to seperate your daily items from wet sports kit.

All in this is a quality solution to keeping your gear dry – though likely only one for hardened adventurers! **HW** *groundtruth.global*

90 %

VERDICT If you're in the market for extreme kit for extreme wet and dirt – look no further!





66° NORTH RAUDASANDUR COAT

£270 ★★★★☆

New-to-*220* Icelandic brand 66° North make premium outdoor clothing and were founded in 1926 with warmth as a priority. Here, the Rauðasandur coat forms part of a collection of lightweight, performance apparel aimed at festivalgoers So why the inclusion in these pages, you might be wondering? Well, with an oversized fit and incredibly light weight, it's a very nifty piece of kit. I've long been on the hunt for something which is light enough to not notice packed on outdoor adventures, but which is big enough to be able to change into after open-water swims – and to wear in bad weather, if I get caught out while in a remote spot.

I sized up to a large here and it gave me plenty of room to change inside without feeling too voluminous for wear as a jacket. The 100% recycled polyamide fabric (the brand are B-Corps rated) is nicely waterproof in showers, but insanely light to wear. A hood, front zip with poppered-storm flap and elasticated cuffs all add to the practical feel.

Ok so it's a little clammy to change inside and can stick to wet skin –plus it doesn't offer the snuggly warmth of most change robes – but I have to caveat that by saying changing isn't the main thing this coat was designed for: it's just a happy accident that it works!

The best bit? The coat easily stuffs inside one of the two zippered pockets where you'll find an adjustable strap waiting to turn the coat into a little bag that can be carried by hand or across the body. **HW** *66north.com* **220**

85 %

VERDICT Expensive coat yes, but it solved a problem for me and has proved indispensible!

LONG COURSE WEEKEND
WALES • CYMRU

26-28TH JUNE 2026
TENBY • PEMBROKESHIRE

BOOK YOUR ENTRY NOW!

ZONE3
THE WALES SWIM
SWIM 2.4 MILE / 1.2 MILE
FRI 26TH JUNE 26
THEWALESSWIM.COM

UPRISE BIKES
THE WALES SPORTIVE
BIKE 112 MILE / 70 MILE / 42 MILE
SAT 27TH JUNE 26
THEWALESSPORTIVE.COM

THE WALES MARATHON
RUN 26.2 MILE / 13.1 MILE / 10K / 5K
SUN 28TH JUNE 26
THEWALESMARATHON.COM

2026 IS NOW OPEN
START YOUR JOURNEY WITH LONG COURSE WEEKEND
LCWWALES.COM

GEAR FOCUS:

ARE MAX CUSHIONED SHOES MAKING US LAZY RUNNERS?

They're super comfy and absorb impact like nobody's business, but are maximalist running shoes making us better runners, or weaker ones?

WORDS KATE MILSOM **PHOTOS** THE SECRET STUDIO

There's no denying that recent years have seen a boom in the popularity of cushioned running shoes. These days, both the seasoned pro and casual jogger can be seen sporting pairs of bouncy, chunky Hokas, New Balances, Nikes, and the like.

Aside from a select few, it seems that most mainstream running brands have jumped on the bouncy bandwagon, with midsole chunk and stack reaching dizzying new heights aboard the maximalist hype. Surely, there's got to be an end in sight?

Plus, at some point, does the comfort and impact-absorption benefits of max cushioning impinge on natural biometrics and could this tip the scale towards injury? To find out, we first need to go back to the basics.

WHAT EXACTLY ARE MAXIMALIST RUNNING SHOES?

Maximalist running shoes are typically defined by one dominant feature, which is excessive cushioning, particularly in the midsole, often accompanied by a high stack height (height of the sole between the foot and the ground) of at least 30mm (1.2").

Due to this, maximalist shoes can appear on the bulky side and may also be heavier (but not always). Brands tend to pack a lot of features into the shoe, like a rockered midsole to aid propulsion, a wider base for stability, and sometimes a carbon plate for speed.

Maximalist shoes emerged as a counter-response to the minimalist running boom of the early 2010s, sparked by books like Christopher McDougall's *Born to Run* and the rise of barefoot-style footwear such as the Vibram FiveFingers.

Minimalist shoes emphasise natural foot motion, low or zero heel-to-toe drop, and reconnecting with ground feedback.

However, this movement had its drawbacks. Many runners reported injuries linked to the abrupt switch to barefoot-style shoes, particularly stress fractures, Achilles tendon issues, and plantar fasciitis, all often caused by underprepared feet and a poor, too-quick transition.

Enter Hoka One One, co-founded in 2009 by two former Salomon employees. Initially popular among ultramarathoners for the reduced fatigue and joint stress over long distances, Hokas exploded in popularity for recreational runners.

Other brands followed suit, integrating maximalist lines into their offerings, such as: Nike ZoomX line, New Balance Fresh Foam line, Asics Gel-Nimbus and Kayano (recent versions), Saucony Endorphin Shift, and Brooks Glycerin. What started as a niche has now become mainstream.

But as this trend takes a seemly permanent place in the mainstream market, questions arise on whether we're trading natural foot function for comfort and if so, could this cause us problems later down the line?

DO MAX CUSHIONED SHOES MAKE RUNNING EASIER?

The main reason we wear max cushioned shoes are primarily for comfort. They're engineered to improve shock absorption from hard ground surfaces and by extension, make running long distances more gentle on the feet and body as a whole. On the surface, max cushioned shoes tick all of the boxes, especially for new runners or those who are more prone to injury. ▸

KATE MILSOM

Kate is 220's former staff writer. She's a keen endurance triathlete, marathon runner, and bikepacker.

▲ Salomon's S/Lab Phantasm 2 (£220) has a full-length carbon plate and 9mm drop.

But 'easier' is a layered term. Do these shoes make running easier on the joints? Yes. Do they make it easier to maintain proper form or build resilient muscles? That's where things get nuanced.

The biggest appeal of maximalist shoes lies in their ability to dampen impact forces, especially for runners who heel strike or suffer from joint pain. The foam acts like a shock absorber, reducing the load transmitted through pain points like the knees, hips, and back.

A study by Becker and Borgia (2020) examined how different shoe types affect muscle activity. They found that maximalist shoes led to increased activation in muscles like the gluteus medius and peroneus longus compared to traditional or minimalist shoes.

It also found that maximalist shoes resulted in less dorsiflexion at foot strike (when the toes are lifted up towards the shin, like when walking/running). This suggests that while maximalist shoes may alter muscle engagement patterns and foundational foot movements, the implications for fatigue or injury remain to be fully understood.

For marathoners and ultrarunners, reduced muscular fatigue can mean the difference between finishing strong or not finishing at all. Maximalist shoes are particularly helpful when cumulative impact forces add up, like over 20,000+ steps in a marathon.

Foam tech like in Nike's ZoomX or Asics' FF Blast+ is engineered not just for cushioning, but also for energy return, meaning the shoe gives back some of the energy a runner puts in, in theory resulting in less fatigue per mile.

Meanwhile, a rocker sole (slightly curved midsole) promotes smoother heel-to-toe transitions, especially when leg turnover slows down in later miles. In essence, it can encourage forward momentum with less muscular effort.

GB pro India Lee competing in a pair of cushioned Asics.

DARREN WHEELER/T100

For new runners or those returning from injury, max shoes can offer a forgiving re-entry into the sport as they allow for softer-feeling footfall and may result in reduced soreness after efforts, making the sport more approachable for beginners. They can also help mitigate common beginner ailments like shin splints or plantar fasciitis (though not universally).

> *"Maximalist shoes significantly reduced plantar pressures across the foot."*

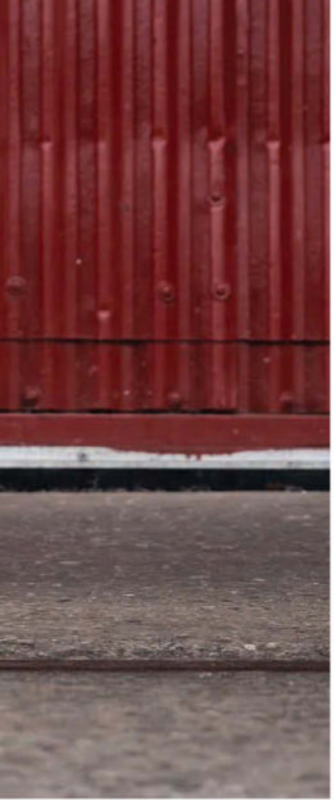
In fact, a study comparing plantar loading forces between minimalist and maximalist shoes showed that maximalist shoes significantly reduced plantar pressures across the foot, particularly in the forefoot region, suggesting a potential benefit in reducing stress on the plantar surface during running (Ogston, 2019).

DO MAXIMALIST SHOES WEAKEN THE LEG AND FOOT MUSCLES?

There is concern that the cushioning in a maximalist shoe may be doing too much of the work, potentially leading to weaker feet, ankles, and lower legs over time.

While these shoes offer comfort and protection, critics argue that they can interfere with the body's natural biomechanics and reduce the engagement of important stabilising muscles needed for running and everyday life.

The thick foam midsoles of maximalist shoes act like shock absorbers while simultaneously dulling



ground feel as a result. This feel is the sensory input that runners unconsciously rely on in order to adjust stride, balance, and foot placement.

This is especially important for trail runners who run on uneven and unpredictable terrain. Such reduced proprioception may delay neuromuscular responses during running and reduce muscle activation in the feet and lower legs.

A 2023 study focusing on non-rearfoot strikers found that maximalist shoes caused a redistribution of joint work from the ankle to the knee (Miyazaki et al.). Specifically, there was a decrease in ankle joint work and an increase in knee joint work when using maximalist shoes compared to minimalist ones.

DO CUSHIONED SHOES ENCOURAGE 'LAZY' RUNNING?

Some physical therapists and biomechanists believe maximalist shoes absorb effort that the muscles should be handling, particularly when it comes to intrinsic foot muscles like the small stabilisers in the arch and forefoot, the calves and Achilles tendon, and ankle stabilisers. All of which are put to work when running and when navigating uneven terrain.

When the shoe does too much of the stabilisation, it can lead to the undertraining of these muscles. The more we wear our maximalist running shoes, the more we could be furthering an increased reliance on cushioned shoes and less natural resilience in the body.

Over-reliance on soft cushioning can also lead to problems like Achilles tendinopathy, IT band syndrome, or plantar fasciitis when muscle balance is lacking or gait is off.

"When you take the foot — which is an amazing structure — and put that into a shoe with arch support, cushioning, etc., the foot becomes lazy and likely more prone to injury", notes Irene Davis, physiotherapist and director of the Harvard-affiliated Spaulding National Running Center (The Harvard Gazette).

It's important to note that the effects of maximalist shoes vary by individual. A well-conditioned runner who incorporates strength training and shoe rotation may not experience muscle weakening, whereas a runner who wears max-cushioned shoes for every run may see reduced foot and calf engagement over time.

READ MORE

Go to www.220triathlon.com to find full reviews of all the best running shoes for max and minimal cushioning, as well as more expert opinon and advice

IS THERE A PLACE FOR MAX CUSHIONED SHOES?

Despite waxing lyrical during this article on the veiled malignancy of maximalist shoes, they aren't inherently bad. In fact, they can be valuable tools for recovery runs, long-distance efforts, and easing joint stress, especially for older runners or those returning from injury.

The comfort and cushioning in maximalist shoes can keep runners consistent, logging more miles with less soreness. But comfort should not replace conditioning. Long story short, what we're saying is that there's a happy medium. Like any piece of kit, see it as a tool to help you train and enjoy your sport, useful in the right context but not to be over-relied on.

Relying exclusively on heavily-cushioned shoes can reduce natural muscle engagement and dull the proprioceptive feedback essential for strong, efficient running. Over time, this may lead to underdeveloped foot and leg muscles or increased reliance on artificial support.

Though in general, more research in needed to pinpoint the benefits and disadvantages of a max cushioned run shoe.

The key as with all things in life, is balance. Use maximalist shoes strategically and rotate them with firmer or lower-profile trainers. Supplement your training with foot-strengthening drills, barefoot strides, or trail runs to re-engage your natural stabilisers. 220

▼ The New Balance FuelCell SuperComp Elite v4 Shoes (£260) are packed with tech for race-day running.

BIKE TEST:

MAIDEN VOYAGE

The XCR Tri is the first triathlon bike from French brand Van Rysel. It's taken three years of research, development and manufacture. But has it been worth the wait?

WORDS JAMES WITTS **PHOTOS** STEVE SAYERS/THE SECRET STUDIO

A A few issues back, I tested Van Rysel's RCR road bike and my word, was I impressed. Decathlon, the brains behind the Van Rysel range, had thrown its considerable heft behind the RCR, maximising premium development tools (using the same wind tunnel and expertise as Onera, France's answer to NASA) and maximising value (it featured a power meter, electronic groupset and carbon galore for around four grand). It was fast, comfortable and just inspired you to get out on the road.

Well now, it's onto another bike in the Van Rysel range, its first triathlon-specific number. The XCR Tri hits the tills just over €6K. That's not cheap but is compared to its premium competition. Have they cut corners or slick through them? Let's hop on-board and find out…

TAPPING INTO AERO EXPERIENCE

First up, this isn't solely a Van Rysel venture. For both this and the RCR, Decathlon's in-house brand tapped into the services and expertise of Swiss Side. As the name suggests, Swiss Side is a Swiss company that specialise in aerodynamics. The founder, Jean-Paul Ballard, spent 14 years as a lead engineer in Formula One including as head of concept design at Sauber. He's also a keen cyclist and is clearly uber-qualified in the world of slipstreaming speed.

The XCR is the follow-up to the XCR UCI-legal time-trial bike that's used by WorldTour cycling team Decathlon AG2R La Mondiale and the likes of Ben O'Connor, who finished second at last year's Vuelta a Espana. The XCR Tri features a UCI-legal frame but non-UCI-compliant accoutrements like the bars.

As well as Swiss Side, Van Rysel sought the input of many of their sponsored athletes including two-time European Ironman champion Denis Chevrot. No doubt, Denis had a say in the myriad triathlon-specific features including a built-in toolbox with included tube, CO2 inflator, valve extender, tyre levers and 6mm Allen key, plus bento box and what Van Rysel term a 'trash box'. It doesn't include integrated hydration but does come with between-the-extensions and behind-the-saddle mounts, albeit not on my test model.

The other visual standout is that cockpit, which offers a huge amount of adjustability. We'll come back to that shortly. It comes in five sizes and two options: Shimano Ultegra Di2-equipped with Swiss Side Hadron wheels, which I tested; and loaded with SRAM Rival AXS groupset and Fulcrum Wind wheels. All in all, there's a lot going on.

Before I dig deep into the ride, I must comment on its looks, which I really rather like. In my eyes, you can't go wrong with a dark, brooding colourway (that often reflects my mood on a long, painful ride, especially into a headwind). It certainly drew glances on my usual ▸

VAN RYSEL
KINGSBOW

Gears are Shimano Ultegra Di2 with power meter.

'High' modulus carbon was chosen to offer a less stiff ride.

Somerset test route that weaved its way from the Severn Channel over to the Mendips and back again. That said, if you're a fan of something a little lighter, it's mooted that a holographic white version will be available from spring 2025, though that wasn't an on-sale option at time of press.

That's jumping the gun, of course. Before I'd set cleats onto pedals, it was all about nailing the set-up, which is always a little more involved on a tri bike than a road bike, especially on the XCR Tri due to the sheer amount of adjustability. The proprietary cockpit offers up to 95mm spacers, so you can adjust their height to your heart's content, while there's 30° of tilt. I'm a fan of a pretty vertical set-up as I find it more comfortable. Swiss Side's also shown from testing that the 'praying mantis' position is extremely aerodynamic, though not for everyone. It depends on your body position, hand position and arm position. Neither of mine are textbook for drag-reducing purposes but they are comfortable, which is a sustainable win in my books. That said, there's loads of fore-and-after adjustment for the most aggressive of aero positions.

SMOOTH RIDE

Once set up, it's clear that one of its major attributes is just how smoothly it hoovers up the tarmac. Unless you're married to the likes of Zwift or Rouvy, or have no sense of feel, riding upon UK roads can often feel akin to the white gravel roads of Tuscany. That's relatively fine on a versatile road bike but can be somewhat disconcerting on a triathlon bike, especially when hunkered down on the extensions.

But with the XCR Tri, comfort flows with every pedal stroke. Why is always down to multi-factorial reasons but one of the major ones is the choice of carbon lay-up. The French brand reportedly chose the high-modulus option over 'super' high-modulus option because the latter was too stiff with the XCR's tube shapes, which are airfoil, albeit with chunky forks for the air to be smoothed out around.

Whatever reason lay behind the comfort, it's noticeable and arguably highlights the attention that'd gone into research, designing and creating the XCR, which Van Rysel tell us took over three years. It also involved 14 prototypes of refinement before the shop went to market. According to the company's white paper, each frame also consists of 586 carbon parts, albeit we couldn't break the bike down to verify!

HANDLES LIKE A DREAM

What about what I feel is the most important aspect of a triathlon bike: handling? Not only is an unstable triathlon bike rather dangerous – especially when the sidewinds doth blow – but it's also incredibly fatiguing, as you attempt to wrestle your bike into a straight line. Thankfully, the XCR Tri handles impressively, even in sidewinds. The XCR Tri also handles well on the basebar, though some might find the length of the grips a touch long.

That handling and stability is helped by the Swiss Side Hadron2 wheels, which are a combination of the 625 upfront and the 800 outback. That equates to a 62.5mm-deep and 80mm-deep rim, respectively. They've been out for a few years now but stand the test of time.

Their handling and stability attributes could be down to the decrease in steering moment from edition one by 26%. Steering moment is the force applied through the handlebar by air pressure acting on the front wheel and results in greater stability. Without comparing incarnations one and two in the wind tunnel, it's impossible to back up the claims but it works where it matters most: in the real world.

If there's one minor complaint, it's that they're not the fastest to accelerate from a brief interlude of deceleration like rolling in and out of a corner, but that's being very picky. That said, you're helped to peak velocity by the Di2 bar-end shifters. Yes, this is nothing new on a top-end triathlon bike, but it'll never become boring shifting through the gears with an effortless press of a button.

Being able to remain in the aero position while rapidly rolling up and down the gears is one of the gamechangers of recent times, especially on a technical course that requires multiple gear changes. Hitting your optimum gear for your optimum cadence depending on the terrain's another win, as you don't leach energy, which pays off on the run. All in all, I might not be the quickest of triathlon cyclists but I certainly can't blame the bar-ends for that.

As for the gearing set-up, the choice of 52/36 Ultegra Di2 upfront and 11-34 outback should be sufficient for all but the amateur Chevots out there. And it weighs around 9.75kg for the large, which is pretty competitive for bikes at a higher price point than this. That relative ▸

The Fizik Aeris saddle is a classic triathlon choice.

Integrated Inpeak power meter is a welcome touch.

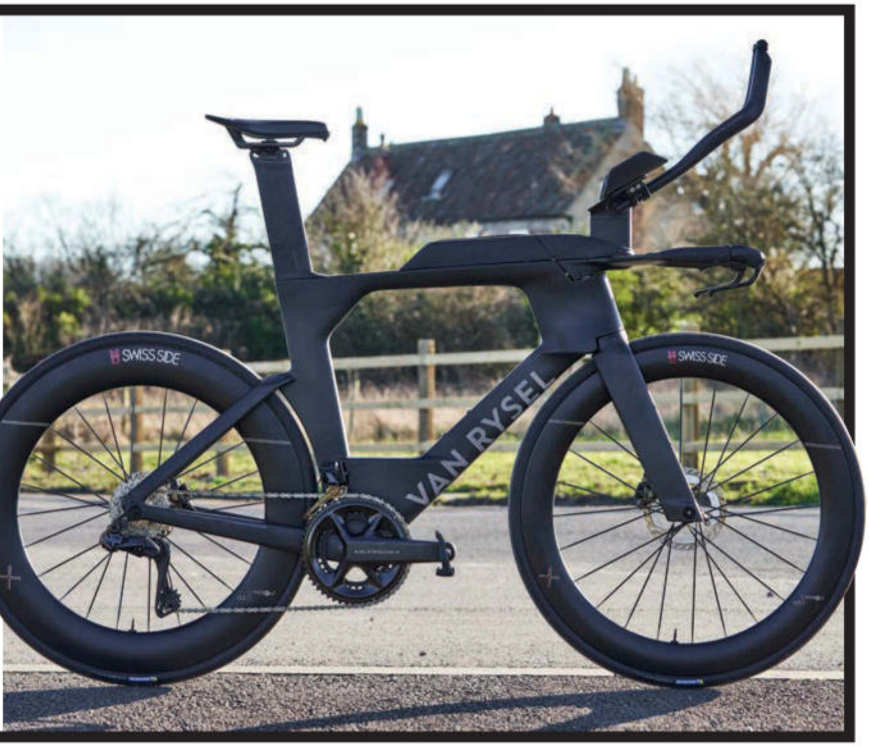
VAN RYSEL XCR TRI

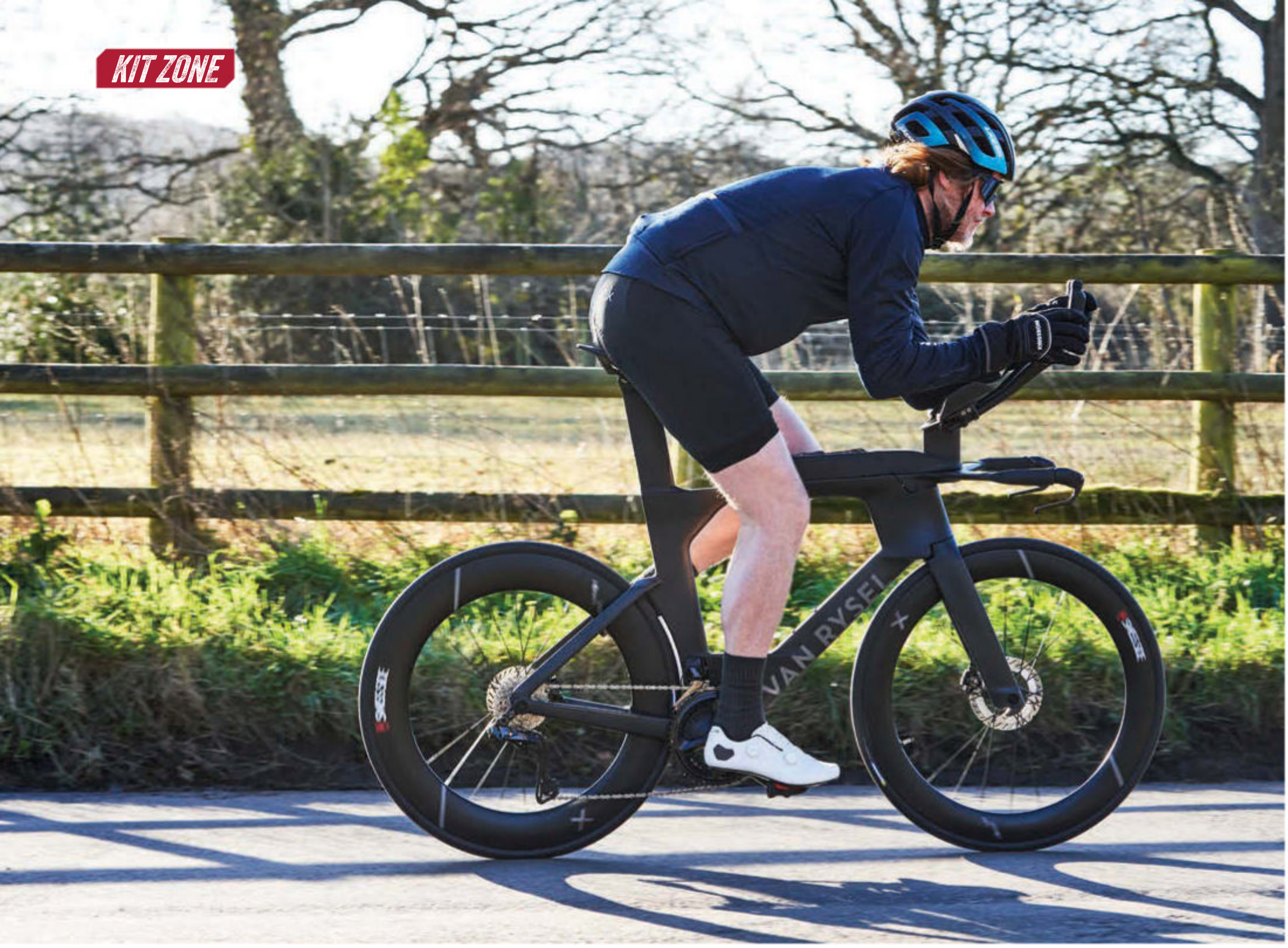
SPECS
Weight 9.75kg (L) **Frame** High-modulus carbon fibre
Gears Shimano Ultegra Di2 with Inpeak power meter
Brakes Shimano R8170 hydraulic brakes
Wheels Swiss Side Hadron2 625 and 800
Finishing kit Van Rysel carbon aerobars, Michelin Power Cup tyres (700c x 25mm), Van Rysel carbon seatpost and Fizik Aeris saddle

HIGHS
Great adjustability upfront; extremely comfortable ride.

LOWS
Nit-picking but bento a little flimsy.

PRICE
€6,350





Many adjustments can be made to the cockpit to get the perfect riding position.

lightness is noticeable when ascending.

As for the triathlon-specific accoutrements, the integrated top-tube bento box is a nice touch and accommodates numerous gels that'll at least keep you riding until the next feed station. A new one to us is the 'trash box' next to it, that's essentially a separated extension of the bento box. It's a nifty idea, though might be more useful to store your sodium capsules if that's part of your hydration strategy. One moot point is that the bento is a little flimsy. Finally, the bottom-bracket-based toolbox is a nifty addition, though thankfully I didn't have to employ the services of its contents.

SURPRISING SPEED

All in all, similar to the RCR a few issues back, Van Rysel's created a product that will surprise many. When you think Decathlon, you think general sports gear, camping equipment and, well, generally products that are utilitarian not premium. You could argue that perception might stop many from spending their money on a bike brand that, on the face of at least, doesn't have the historical cache of your Cervelos or Scotts.

But don't let that cloud your judgement. This is an impressive triathlon bike for the most experienced of triathletes. It's even more impressive when you consider it's their debut effort. It's comfortable, handles nicely and is fast, though on that last point and with a nod to the future, we'd be interested to see just how fast a Van Rysel triathlon bike could be if the frame didn't adhere to UCI regulations. That's for another time. For now, chapeau to the French brand. 220

FOR A LOT MORE...

The XCR Tri Rival AXS will cost you €7,690. It features the same carbon frame as the bike we tested but a less-premium spec list, including Fulcrum Wind 550/750 wheels and a SRAM Rival power meter.

FOR A LITTLE LESS...

Okay, the Van Rysel RCR I tested several issues back is a road bike not a tri bike, but there are currently just two tri bikes available in the VR range (you can always add clip-ons to this one!). High-modulus carbon frame, Zipp 303s carbon wheels and 12-speed SRAM Rival eTap are the highlights.

85 %

VERDICT Verdict Another triumph of a bike from Van Rysel which I struggled to find much to improve on

DOLAN
CUSTOM BUILT BRITISH BIKES

0% FINANCE AVAILABLE
upto 36 months

TR1
From £3,749.99

TR1
DOLAN
ALPINA
CONTINENTAL

ARES
From £2,999.99

cycle2work
SEE WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS SAVE UPTO 40%

SHOWROOM & BIKE FITTING STUDIO
UNIT 7 RINGTAIL PLACE, BURSCOUGH LANCASHIRE, L40 8LA
info@dolan-bikes.com

LIFETIME WARRANTY

SWANS

HUUB
OCEANE
BUDDYSWIM
orca

ON TEST:

OPEN-WATER SWIMMING GOGGLES

When it comes to open-water season and triathlon racing, choosing goggles fit for purpose can make a huge difference. Here are seven sets on test...

WORDS AND PHOTOS HELEN WEBSTER

Polarised or mirrored? Amber or grey? Big or small..? When it comes to choosing a set of goggles for open-water swimming, the choices can seem overwhelming. Over the next few pages I've tested seven pairs of goggles all designed to make swimming (and racing!) outdoors easier. But which should you go for?

Many open-water goggles will be larger than pool goggles. The extra width and height on the lenses can increase peripheral vision and make it easier to see what (and who!) is around you. Comfort is key here though, so think about whether you prefer a goggle that sits in or just around your eyes, or a larger mask-style design. You'll also need a pair that fit you well so try the 'suction test' before buying – poorly-fitting goggles will run the risk of leaking and there's nothing worse!

As for the tint and coating, choose something that will support you in the places you swim. Polarised and mirrored lenses are more expensive but can be worth it for the enhanced visibility and reduction in glare, especially if racing overseas in bright sunlight. The colour tint you choose can be partly personal preference, as well as being appropriate to the levels of light you swim in.

Finally, don't forget to look after your goggles to help them last! ▸

Thank you to Cotswold Water Park hire (**cotswoldwaterparkhire.com**) at Lake 86 for the location for these photos. The site offers open-water swimming as well as paddleboard hire in a beautiful setting.

220 TRIATHLON BEST ON TEST

TRI-FIT
VOLT £35

★★★★★

tri-fitathletic.co.uk

Over my years on *220 Triathlon*'s test team I've tested a lot of goggles. I don't mind sharing that despite the collection in my spare room, I'm very choosy about what I wear to train and race in though.

Yes, it takes a lot to become one of my chosen pairs and with good reason, as minor irritations like leaking or fogging can easily spoil a good swim – or derail your race entirely.

Spoiler alert though: the new Volt goggles from Tri-fit have instantly made it into my favourites.

The Volt come in a hard plastic case, which I like when buying a premium set of goggles, as I know if they don't I'll end up scratching them. Inside, the Volt goggles come with a choice of three nose bridges which easily snap in and out. I started with the medium bridge but found the lenses a little too far apart, so swapped it out for the smallest size which gave a perfect fit. Placing these against my face, a soft and comfortable set of gaskets instantly created a good seal without having to push them too hard against my face.

The straps are chunky and flat with good grip thanks to the eco-friendly silicone head strap with dual headband design to prevent slipping. This is adjusted via two clips, one on each side, which were easy to use.

The strap did a great job of keeping the goggles in place and sat well around my ponytail tucked inside my swim cap.

The curved shape of the Volt's lenses made for a sleek look as well as a wide field of peripheral vision. I like that they are mirrored too – technically this helps to reduce glare, but aesthetically I prefer the way mirrored goggles look, especially on race day (handy if you want to psych out your competitors!).

Tri-fit tell me this design has optical-grade lenses with a scratch-proof, impact-proof, waterproof and fingerprint-free and advanced anti-fog coating included. I'll be honest this test pair have had a very hard life with many events, training swims and a 33.3km swim event in Croatia which saw them stuffed in and out of a drybag and they've held up superbly.

Many of my swims in these has been in bright sunlight in clear water. I found visibility to be superb, with just enough of a tint to take the glare off the bright light while keeping colours true. I found I could see well and the colour contrast was good.

I didn't experience any leaking or fogging and this remained the case through multiple swims following this first test. I also found the goggles handled low light and gloomy days well.

As we went to press with this issue a parcel arrived with two new colourways and lenses in these goggles – blue and pink – which may be a better choice for low light. I'll be testing these soon!

98 %

VERDICT I love these goggles. Great visibility, comfortable and the tint is ideal for open-water racing.

HUUB APHOTIC £54.99

★★★★½

huubdesign.com

Around for a few years now, the Aphotic none-the-less retains its position as a great option for open-water swimming. The lenses here are photochromatic, which means they lighten or darken in response to the levels of sunlight as you swim. Ideal if you tend to swim in multiple types of conditions, or are facing a swim where there may be both low and bright light (such as an early morning Ironman start for example!).

I've swum in these many times and have always found them leak-free with good visibility thanks to the curved lens. They're a chunky offering and can feel a little heavy on long swims, but it's a minor niggle. Six frame colours are available, with polarised or mirrored lenses (mirrored tested here).

90% **VERDICT** High price but also high quality and versatility. A classic design that continues to impress.

BUDDYSWIM OZEAN €48.90

★★★★½

buddyswim.com

The funkily-named Ozean goggles from Buddyswim come in an equally funky 10 different colour and lens options (ranging from €39.90 to €48.90 for the mirrored options).

Here on test are the more premium mirrored option with a restrained black frame and silver lens. The gaskets are very soft and flexible here meaning it was easy to get a good seal. That unusual honeycomb effect on them aids this by compressing and bouncing back as you smush them (technical term!) to your face. The double strap felt secure.

In the water, the large curved lenses allowed superb visibility. I'm yet to try other lens options in this new range and I did find this option quite dark, but on a bright and sunny day in clear blue water they did a great job.

88% **VERDICT** Flexible frames with a funky design that aids fit and comfort. Lenses in this option for bright sun.

ZONE3 VENATOR-X £35

★★★★½

zone3.com

Zone3's Venator-X hasn't appeared in these pages for a while – though you can find reviews of their Volare and Vapour models online in our 'best swimming goggles' article. That's not to say there isn't a lot to like here. First up, there are 12 different frame colour and lens options including a photochromatic version (£42.50) as well as various tints and clear options.

The Venator-X sits in the middle of the range between the large Vapour (similar to the Huub Aphotics) and the smaller Volares which sit more closely to the eye socket.

On test here are the orange with blue lenses. Now personally I'd usually choose a polarised/mirrored option which retails for the same price, but for a swim goggles nerd who's tried just about every pair out there I was still pleasantly surprised by the look and feel of these. The bright orange frames did stand out from the rest on test here and anecdotally, made me easier to spot in the melée of a busy swim event. Also easier to find inside a kit bag!

These were comfortable too, with soft gaskets and a curved lens fitting my face well. They felt nicely finished and good quality and with no fiddly parts, like they could survive the chaos of my swim kit bag well (again though, a reminder to put your goggles away carefully after each swim...).

On that note, you don't get a case with these but many brands are opting not to provide a case now for environmental reasons on the basis that you can buy one seperately if you need one. Zone3 offer a quality zippy case with fleece lining for an extra £10 which seems reasonable added to the cost of these goggles.

Adjustment is via two subtle clips on the side of the goggles which work well and the wide strap with split at the back kept them in place well as I swam. Little rubber dots on the straps aided them staying put, too.

In the water and the pale blue tint of these was perfect to cut out the worst of the warm glare of the sun on bright days, improving visibility but without taking it down so much that visibility was compromised on dull days. They would also work in the pool, if you want a pair that can multitask.

The chunkiness of the frames does mean they are quite visible as I swim and there isn't the range of vision as you get with some of the others on test but it's a case of considering how much you need. I found these worked well and I didn't feel I had any blind spots, the slight curve working well to show around me in the water.

The price point here is reasonable for a set of goggles that feel good quality. The choice of options also means you can undoubtedly find a pair to suit you and to match your race-day kit!

88 %

VERDICT Chunky and dependable set of goggles with myriad colour options and lenses available.

ZOGGS
PREDATOR FLEX £65

★★★★★

zoggs.com

The Predator range has long been a go-to choice for triathletes and this is well-earned, through a mix of comfort and performance. These days there's a wide range under the name and here are (arguably) the top tier – the Predator Flex Reactor. I've always loved this style as the gently curved lenses and flexible integrated bridge allow me to get a great fit, with no leaks or fogging and they tend to last a good amount of time, too. The wide straps fit well and help me to get a secure fit. Key here is that word 'Reactor' though, as similarly to the Huubs in this test, these change colour as the light intensifies. They are the most expensive on test but they work well and a clamshell zipped case with soft lining is included.

92 % **VERDICT** You can't argue with the quality and appeal of these goggles, though they are a considered spend.

220 TRIATHLON
HIGHLY RATED

ORCA
KILLA COMFORT £24

★★★★½

orca.com

These bug-eye style goggles come in three colours: the black with smoked lenses shown here, black with mirrored lenses (reviewed on 220triathlon.com) and white with clear lenses. Personally I'd go for the mirrored version which are the same price, but if you just want plain smoked lenses these are they! I've used the Orca Killa 180° goggles for a while now and these are like the bigger brother with a similarly wide, soft gasket and comfortable feel. They'd be ideal for swimmers who feel happier with larger lenses, though they're maybe a little big for me and I tended to get my swim cap caught in the edges. For the price though they're a great option and the wide strap kept them nicely secure. No case is included here, but they are a bargain!

84 % **VERDICT** A little too big for me, but the gaskets are soft and comfortable and they're a bargain price point.

220 TRIATHLON HIGHLY RATED

SWANS ASCENDER £56.99

★★★★★

swansuk.co.uk

Straight out of the box and the Ascender goggles from Japanese brand Swans just *look* fast. They're sleek and shaped in a way which suggests they're designed to be worn for racing with elongated and curved lenses here in a blue mirrored finish. They're also World Aquatics-approved, if that's something that is likely to be a factor in your racing!

In total there are 10 colour and lens options in this open-water specific model ranging from a simple black and white frame with clear lenses (£47.99), through several mirrored options (£49.99) with the top end of the range being two photochromatic versions at £65.99). The smoke blue mirrored version tested here (£56.99) is slightly different though, as it is one of only two colourways to include MIT lenses, which adds a little to the price point.

MIT stands for 'Mirror Insert Technology' which gives gives additional scratch protection for the lenses. In testing this claim rang true and I didn't experience any scratching on the lenses – plus as these are a premium goggle anyway, I would be tempted (if these suit you) to pay a little more for that addtional protection. Try as I might to look after my goggles in the world of open water they inevitably end up sitting on the ground at times, especially if flung around in a triathlon transition!

In the water, the blue tint on this version did a great job of cutting out harsh sunlight and cooling things down when the sun was blazing. The other MIT option has a warm red-tinted lens and I'd be interested to see if that would work better for gloomier conditions.

Fit here was excellent and although more low-profile than some of the others on test I didn't have a problem getting a good seal and they stayed on well even in tumultuous open water race starts, I think in part due to the sleek shape.

The strap is a single strap which splits to go around the back of the head twice with a simple clip on the back to adjust them which clicks open and shut. It's a touch fiddly but felt very secure once the goggles were adjusted and didn't need any further tweaking through multiple swims.

Also included are a choice of nose bridges and I sized down here and easily found a good fit. It was simple to click in and out of place.

These are one of the higher-priced sets of goggles on test and they do come with a case, though this could have been better – it's a simple plastic box with a sliding lid which detatches and is easy to lose. A better case for a premium set of goggles would have been nice.

On the whole though, these look great, perform well and will be in the rotation for my swims and races for the year ahead! 220

92 %

VERDICT Great fit and sleek looks and I loved the lenses on these. Premium goggles with a real race edge.

THE INSURANCE Emporium

PROTECT YOUR GREAT ESCAPE

YOUR GETAWAY. INSURED.

Insurance for your bicycles, caravans, pets and more with our wide range of policies.

UP TO 20% DISCOUNT ON CYCLE INSURANCE

The maximum discount is 20% - this is a combination of 10% Security Discount and 10% Lock Discount.

VISIT THEINSURANCEEMPORIUM.CO.UK/TRIATHLON
call 03300 243 920 today!

defaqto ★★★★★ Pet Insurance 2019-2025 EXPERT RATED
defaqto ★★★★★ Bike Insurance 2025 EXPERT RATED
defaqto ★★★★★ Caravan Insurance (Touring) 2025 EXPERT RATED
Platinum Trusted Service Award 2025 feefo
WINNER Moneyfacts Consumer Awards 2024 Best Claims Service

Lifestyle Policy Limited is an appointed representative of The Equine and Livestock Insurance Company Limited. The Insurance Emporium ® is a trading name of The Equine and Livestock Insurance Company Limited (registered in England and Wales no: 294940) which is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority no: 202748.

AWARD-WINNING SUPPLEMENTS

revive active®

Supporting some of the **best pro-athletes, from Olympians to GB squads,** Revive Active supplements have been **the power behind podium medals** and **PBs** and... **we've won an award or two ourselves.**

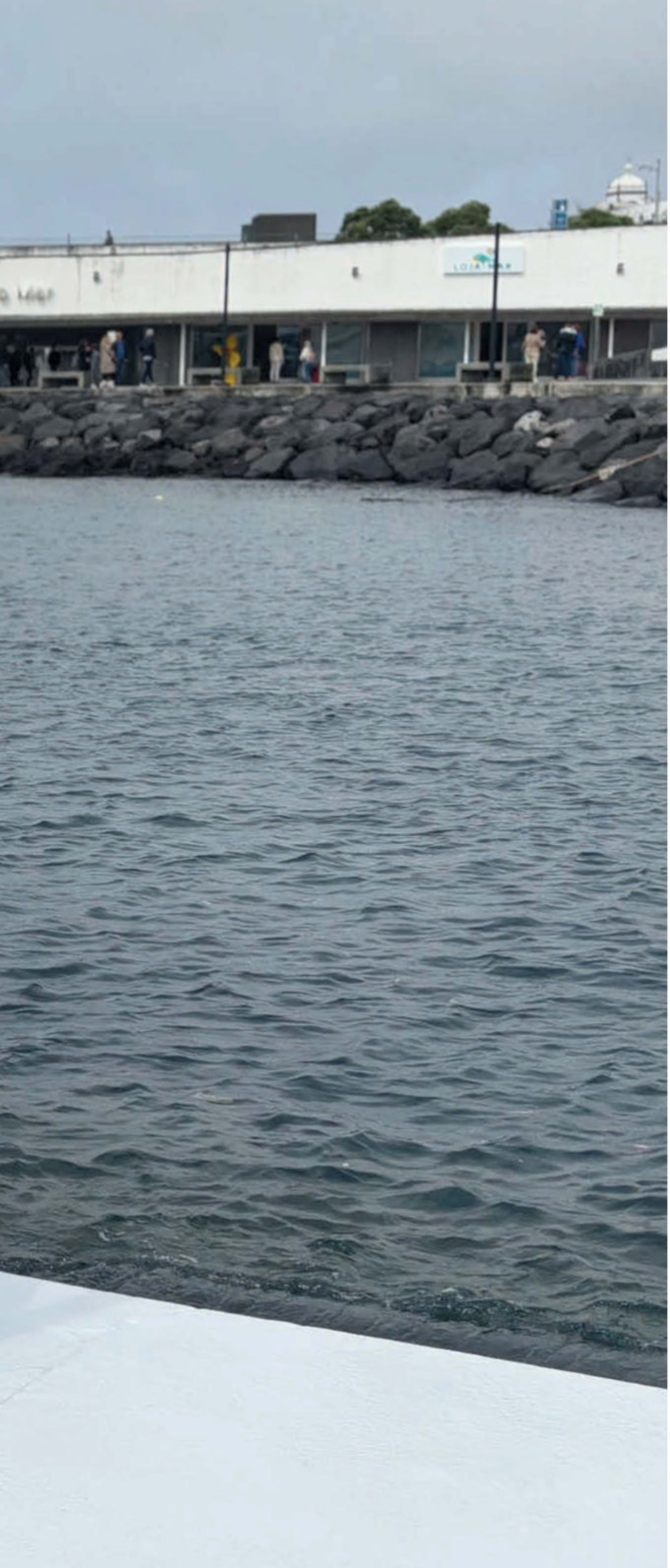
pro sport Providing **energy, immune support, joint support and more,** start winning with our **comprehensive all-in-one formulas,** available also for elites with our **ProSport, Informed Sports Certified range.**

joint complex
CARTILAGE
BONES
CONNECTIVE TISSUE
MUSCLE FUNCTION
revive active
ENERGY
IMMUNE SYSTEM
FATIGUE
HEART
zest active
ENERGY
MUSCLE FUNCTION
BRAIN
IMMUNE SYSTEM

10% OFF with code BEST10 reviveactive.com

Joint Complex winner of Women's Running Best Collagen For Joints 2025, Zest Active winner of Women's Running Best Nutrition Supplement 2025, Revive Active winner of Rude Health Best Immune Support. 10% off the Revive Active range is valid when applying code BEST10 at reviveactive.com checkout. This offer is valid until 30 September 2025 or whilst promotional stocks last. One use per customer only. This offer is not valid on subscriptions, We reserve the right to amend or withdraw this offer without further notice. Promoter: Revive Active, Galway Business Park, Galway, Ireland, H91 EE39.

SWIMQUEST
GUIDE
HUUB
SUB22
HUUB



ON TEST:

TOP-END TRI-SUITS

Once you get over the £200 mark you can expect some serious tech in your tri-suit. Here are the latest launches for women, with six premium suits put through their swim, bike and run paces.

WORDS SARAH BROADLEY **PHOTOS** ED BROADLEY

We've already covered off what's new in entry-level tri-suits (issue 443 group test), as well as the men's top-end tri-suits (issue 444 group test) so this month it's the turn of the more premium women's offerings.

Aside from the larger spend though, what should you be looking for in a top-end tri-suit? Well, this is where brands start to couple comfort and performance with real technical edge to give you those marginal gains come race day.

Fit is key as always, but what should you look for in a women's suit? Well, comfort has to be a priority. No matter how technical a suit is, if you don't feel great in it you won't have a great race. This extends to how the design copes with women's physiology too. Is there an integrated bra in the suit and is it any good? How easy is it to get the suit on and off (important if you need a loo stop, as it's already less easy for women!) and is the chammy comfortable yet unobtrusive?

I would expect to see aerodynamics and use of premium, breathable fabrics as well as tech designed to help me slip through the air more quickly in an aero bike position, such as lines or dimpling on the shoulders.

Storage is important, but less may be more depending on the distance of race. All good? Turn the page to find out what's new! ▸

PERFORMANCE
APPAREL

220 TRIATHLON BEST ON TEST

RYZON ARISE £305

★★★★★

ryzon.co.uk

The Ryzon Arise suit is impressive straight out of the box – the minimalist clean design instills confidence that it is ready for the demands of any race.

The suit is made in Lithuania from fabrics sourced in France. It's supple and supportive, providing fabulous comfort in all three disciplines with a body-hugging fit that ensures no chafing and good aerodynamics. The fabric feels more robust than some of the others on test but is still soft to the touch without feeling synthetic. I found the sizing just perfect, no pressure points or any places where it felt too loose or too tight – just like a supportive second skin.

The suit was tested both with and without wetsuit on the swim. Without a wetsuit, it sits in place, doesn't hold excessive amounts of water and offers excellent flexibility at the shoulders to enable free-flowing front crawl. It was relatively easy to get the wetsuit over the top (not always the case with legs and sleeves) without much rolling up at the legs or arms. I did experience some chafing under one arm in Valencia but this could have been due to the wetsuit and or salty sea water as I never experienced this in training in the suit.

On the bike, the suit dries quickly and the triathlon-specific seat pad with three-layer construction provides adequate protection for a comfortable middle distance event. I'm confident it would be comfortable for longer in the saddle too. Here again, the fabric provides a great balance of comfort and compression thanks to the fine yarn quality and elastane content. The pockets, although small, are big enough to pop in a few emergency gels which are quick to access whilst riding.

The Arise continues to be great when running. The suit I tested was in black but the moisture-wicking properties kept me cool with adequate ventilation. I did experience some white sweat marks appearing on the suit during the run which was probably exacerbated by the sea water. The silicone grippers on the legs and sleeves kept the suit in position and the ergonomic seam designs prevented any chafing. The UV protection also ensures your skin is protected from the damaging effects of the sun if you are fortunate enough to race on a sunny day!

The suit has been through the wash numerous times and so far there are no signs of wear on the fabric and it has maintained its shape and properties. The zipper runs up and down easily, and even though it's a one piece design the zipper is long enough to allow easy entry/exit from the suit. An additional bonus is that your modesty is protected as it remains opaque even when wet.

This suit was the clear winner for me in this category- great fit, feel, comfort and performance.

98 %

VERDICT The clear winner in this test. A great fit, comfortable and supportive with superb features.

BORN BOUND
SKÄRVATTEN PRO LONG DISTANCE TRI SUIT £230

★★★★½

Bornbound.com

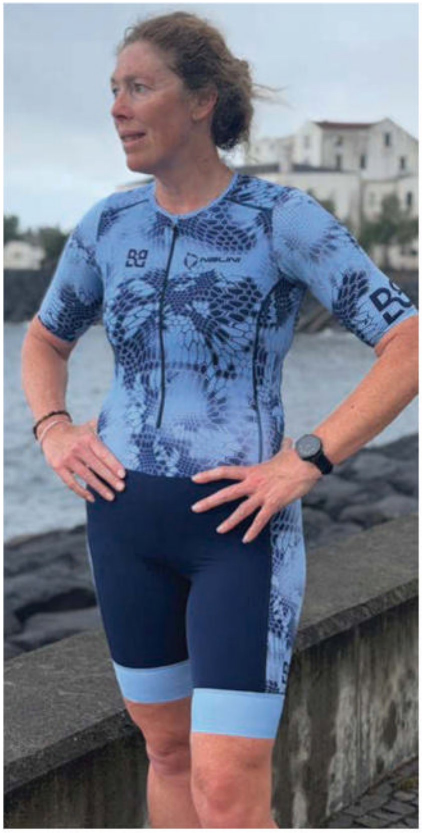
The Skarvatten Pro Long Distance suit is certainly recognisable and will be popular for its striking looks but also speedy credentials.

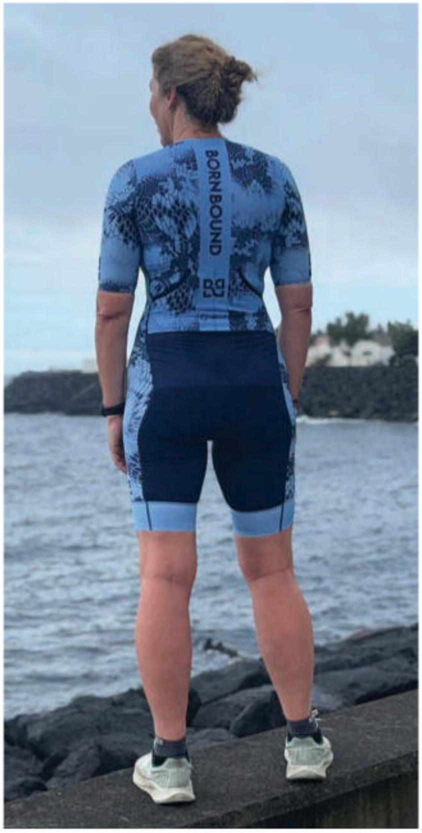
The suit is sleek and well fitting – true to size but you may want to size down if you don't have a very long torso to avoid the arms and legs becoming too long. It's silky smooth on the swim – just like a second skin, dries fast on the bike and feels light on the run due to the breathability of the fabric. This is all down to the premium fabrics used in collaboration with Nalini to provide optimum aerodynamics.

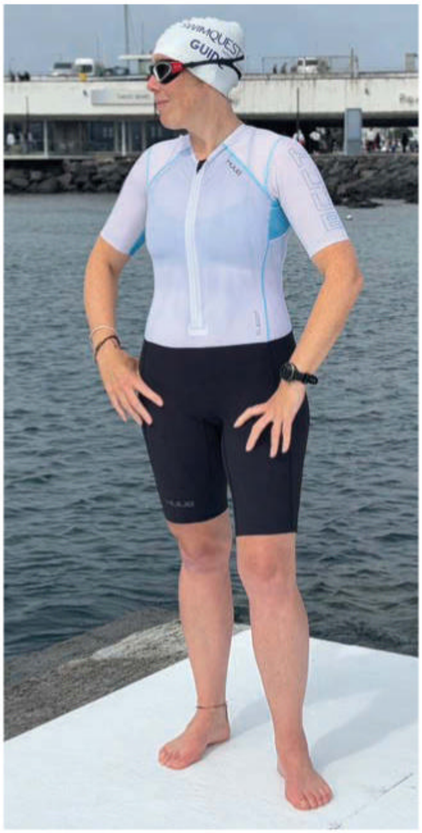
I experienced some chafing at the neck line (caused by a rough seam outside the zip garage) and my modesty was occasionally compromised when adopting an aggressive riding position.

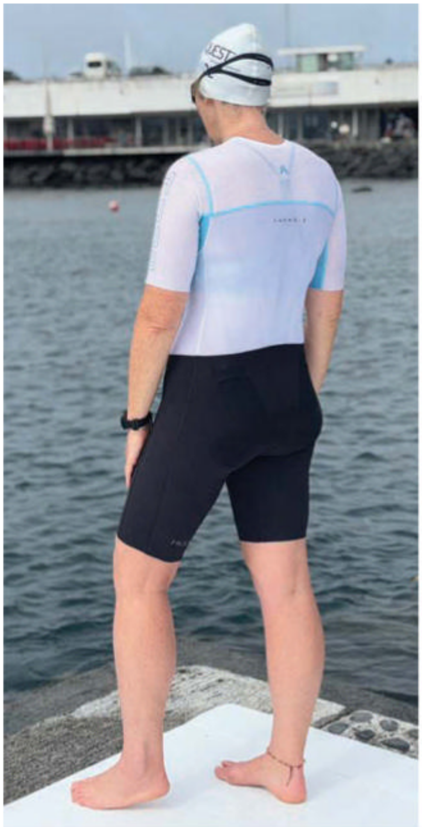
83 %

VERDICT It's great to see a bold colourful suit with some impressive performance properties too.









HUBB
ANEMOI 2 SUB-22 £299.99

★★★★½

huubdesign.com

HUUB's Anemoi suit offers a good fitting suit ready for middle distance triathlon. Despite initial concerns that the fabric felt paper thin and delicate, the suit has proved comfortable and durable.

It fits well around the shoulders and torso feeling supportive whilst maintaining full flexibility for swimming. The legs could do with being slightly tighter around the thighs but the saddle pad is well balanced to provide comfort when required without becoming bulky. The mesh sleeves do feel plasticy to the touch, but when on, are cool and comfortable.

The white upper body really helps to keep you feeling cool but this does come at the cost of being opaque when wet! Overall, a premium feeling suit ideal for middle distance triathlon.

89 %

VERDICT Stylish suit that kept me cool racing in hot temperatures. White fabric turns see-through though!

ARGON 18
KOO
KASK
TRAININGPEAKS

wahoo
BONKBREAKER
MAUNA

220 TRIATHLON HIGHLY RATED

MAUNA OUREA PRO £236

★★★★★

maunaapparel.com

Mauna is a triathlon apparel brand based out of Oceanside California. Their suits are engineered to balance comfort, function and speed for athletes of all levels.

This suit feels premium straight out of the box, crafted from Swiss and Italian fabrics it feels light, airy and cool. The top half is ultra thin and lightweight whilst the shorts are ever so slightly heavier which provides compression around the leg muscles to aid performance whilst ensuring they remain opaque when wet.

Size-wise, the shorts had an excellent comfortable fit with a high waistband to provide maximum comfort. Although the top did not feel overly tight, I could have done with a little more fabric around the bottom of the zip as it did pull slightly in this area. The full front zipper makes it easy to get on and off which is really helpful when stopping for the toilet!

In the water, there is very little drag from the suit. The slim fit sits right on the skin and the ultralight fabric around the shoulders allows for full flexibility. When worn under a wetsuit, this thin fabric coupled with the silicone grippers hold it in place to prevent any rolling up of legs or sleeves. Once out of the water, the suit dries fast.

The chammy is particularly comfortable in this suit. It's pretty discrete, practical and yet provides good support in the areas it is needed. The seat pad fabric is both soft and breathable which prevents an excessive heat and moisture build up in this area for all day comfort.

When running, the suit's moisture management features really come into play – the suit wicks sweat away from the body and the mesh panels (ventilation zones) running down each side of the suit help to manage your body temperature in hot conditions. The laser-cut edges to the sleeves and legs ensure no chafing and the seams are all flat and neatly finished to avoid any hotspots. Additionally the built in 50+ SPF means that you can be confident that your skin is protected from the sun's harmful rays.

The suit features two good sized pockets in the rear that are relatively easy to access and each holds a couple of gels securely despite some bumpy road surfaces. The pockets are separate so you can be confident to grab the correct fuel if you have stored things separately – a useful feature.

Available in women's sizes ranging from from XS to 2XL, this suit offers great performance at a competitive price for a premium suit. Ideal for races and training in warmer climates, the fabrics give a great balance of comfort and performance. An added bonus is that you can, for an additional charge, customise your suit.

92%

VERDICT Stylish suit from a brand that is new to *220* but already offering a level of tech that is seriously good.

CASTELLI
PR2 £360

★★★★½

castelli-cycling.com

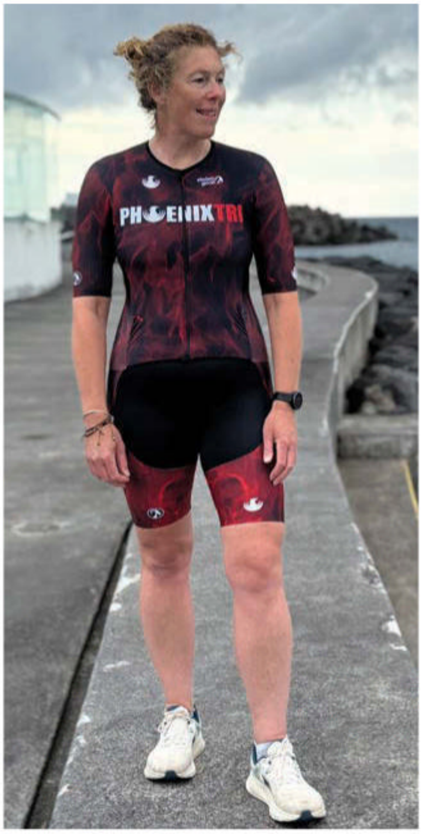
Castelli's PR2 Speed suit is the latest upgrade on their middle to long-distance trisuit aimed at maximising speed. Clearly designed to perform fast on the bike it also holds its own in the swim and run too!

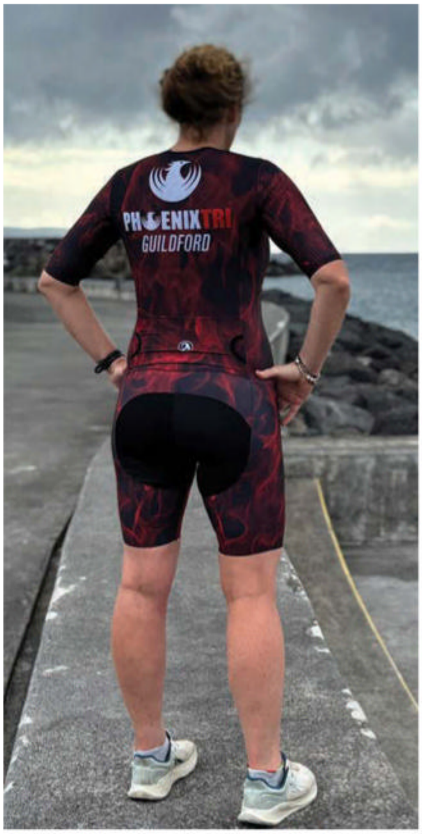
The bottom half of this suit is impressive – featuring a Kiss seatpad and a seamless construction using silky soft Premio fabrics. It offers an excellent fit with just the right balance of compression and comfort.

The top is soft and thin, moisture wicking to ensure you stay cool on the run and the silicone speed ribs on the shoulders and sleeves help to reduce drag on the bike (even if they do create a little extra challenge for wetsuit application!). It dried quickly post swim and two good-sized pockets on the rear offer good storage.

91 %

VERDICT Overall a striking looking, solid choice for middle distance triathlon with decent storage included.





STOLEN GOAT
PHOENIX TRI SUIT £160

★★★★½

stolengoat.com

Light and airy fabric with four way stretch to ensure a good fit throughout. The front torso panel zips like a jersey so it's easy to get on and off and the waist height is great on the shorts to give a comfortable fit. The Cytech chamois pad is female-specific and provides adequate protection without being cumbersome on the run.

The fabric has boundary layer turbulation on the sleeves (used by pro cyclist Pogacar!) for improved aerodynamics with the added bonus that it doesn't stick to the wetsuit. Handy pockets are on the rear but the triple layers of fabric here does make this area warmer. The rest of the suit wicks moisture during the bike and run.

Currently only available as a custom suit for tri clubs this suit is set to roll out to the main collection next year. **220**

87 %

VERDICT Only available for clubs at the moment but next year's main launch should see this a popular choice!

ESSENTIAL KIT

All you need to train & race, as rated by our 220 Kit Zone expert testers

TOP-END WETSUITS

If your goal is to exit T1 first, you'll want a suit that strikes the balance between flexibility, buoyancy and comfort, while also being super easy to remove on the fly.

Orca
Apex Flex
★★★★⯪
£589 Soft and flexible; ideal for good swimmers.
Issue 432
orca.com

Yonda
Ghost 3
★★★★⯪
£589 Impressive mix of flexibility and buoyancy.
Issue 417
yondasports.com

Sailfish
G-Range 8
★★★★★
£691 Unrivalled freedom and the fastest on test.
Issue 432
sailfish.com

Zone3
Aspire
★★★★★
£549 Buttery-soft and our highest-rated suit.
Issue 444
zone3.com

Zoggs
Hypex Ultra FS
★★★★⯪
£700 Incredibly supple; improved hydrodynamics.
Issue 432
zoggs.com

BUDGET WETSUITS

Always try before you buy as sizes can vary massively between brands. Then consider your swim ability, as some features may be lost on newbies (e.g. thin neoprene and reduced buoyancy).

Van Rysel
SD Neoprene
★★★★☆
£119.99 A great option for shorter distances.
Issue 406
decathlon.co.uk

Lomo
Nuotare
★★★★☆
£125 Price, comfort and inclusive sizing combine.
Issue 422
lomo.co.uk

Speedo
Proton
★★★★⯪
£140 A crazy price for a suit that performs so well.
Issue 417
speedo.com

Zone3
Aspect
★★★★⯪
£179 Performs well and is breaststroke specific.
Issue 429
zone3.com

B70
Fusion
★★★★★
£350 A flexible suit with a great fit and feel.
Issue 444
blueseventy.com

POOL GOGGLES

When shopping for a new pair, consider tint to deal with bright lighting, width of vision and comfort to ensure a fuss-free swim.

Orca
Killa Speed
★★★★⯪
£17 Sleek goggles with a choice of nose bridges.
Issue 427
orca.com

Zoggs
Predator
★★★★⯪
£25 Great price and size range; no leaks or fogging.
Issue 427
zoggs.com

Tri-Fit
Rapid-X
★★★★⯪
£30 Superb visibility; soft and comfy gaskets.
Issue 427
tri-fitathletic.com

Roka
R1 Clear
★★★★⯪
£32 Superb all-round visibility. Great fit, too.
Issue 427
uk.roka.com

Zone3
Volare
★★★★⯪
£35 Great, comfy fit, plus polarised lenses.
Issue 427
zone3.com

OPEN-WATER GOGGLES

Outdoor swimming goggles should ideally have mirrored or polarised lenses for greater clarity. Often the lenses are bigger, too, for greater peripheral vision.

Orca
Killa Comfort
★★★★⯪
£24 Comfortable, great visibility and an impressive price. Good stuff.
Issue 430
orca.com

Zoggs
Predator Ultra
★★★★⯪
£38 A true classic and top performance from the polarized lenses.
Issue 430
zoggs.com

TheMagic5
Blue Mirror Gold
★★★★⯪
£75 Made-to-measure goggles that deliver near perfection.
Issue 430
themagic5.com

Tri-Fit
Volt
★★★★★
£35 Superb fit at a good price. The goggles our Editor relies on for races.
Issue 445
tri-fitathletic.com

Form
Smart Swim 2
★★★★⯪
£229 Unique tech that offers real benefits for pool and open water.
Issue 430
formswim.com

COLD-WATER SWIM KIT

Adding neoprene accessories can make your winter swimming much less biting, so consider swim caps, gloves and socks.

Lomo
Open Water Socks
★★★★☆
£21 Good breadth of sizing, plus appreciated grippers to avoid slipping.
Issue 425
lomo.co.uk

Orca
Thermal Cap
★★★★⯪
£35 Warm and plenty of flex; great thermal lining for the price.
Issue 425
orca.com

Zone3
Heat-Tech Gloves
★★★★⯪
£39 Toasty and great grip. Liquid-seal finish ensures snug fit.
Issue 425
zone3.com

Zone3
Heat-Tech Socks
★★★★⯪
£39 You can't argue with the warmth and waterproofing here.
Issue 425
zone3.com

2XU
Propel Gloves
★★★★⯪
£45 Cosy pair of gloves with superb grip. Just check the size fits you.
Issue 425
uk.2xu.com

For tonnes more tri kit, head to 220tri.com

TURBO TRAINERS

Turbo trainers range from the traditional A-frame design to smart trainers that sync to online training platforms like Zwift and Rouvy.

Tacx
Flow
★★★★☆
£299.99 Simple set up, impressively quiet and a great price.
Issue 426
garmin.com

Wahoo
Kickr Core
★★★★½
£549.99 Capable and quiet. Comes with 12 months of Zwift, too.
Issue 415
uk.wahoofitness.com

Saris
H3
★★★★½
£749.99 Feature packed and accurate. Often heavily discounted.
Issue 426
saris.com

Elite
Justo
★★★★☆
£999.99 'Flex Feet' provides a natural ride feel and relatively light at 17kg.
Issue 426
elite-it.com

Wahoo
Kickr Move
★★★★☆
£1,399.99 A very good high-end trainer, but needs tweaking. Pricey.
Issue 426
uk.wahoofitness.com

TRIATHLON BIKES

The key here is fit and comfort. Remember: the least aerodynamic thing on the bike is you, so have a bike fit to refine your position.

Argon 18
E119 Tri+ Disc
★★★★☆
£7,300 This is a fast, aggressive triathlon superbike with plenty of impressive innovation.
See 220triathlon.com
argon18.com

Orro
Venturi Tri
★★★★½
£5,950 Climbs purposefully, handles like a road bike and is pretty damn fast.
Issue 421
orrobikes.com

Cube
Aerium C:68X SLT
★★★★½
£8,999 A blisteringly fast, cutting-edge tri superbike with a bonus hydration option.
Issue 428
cube.eu

Canyon
Speedmax CFR Disc
★★★★★
£12,949 Blisteringly fast and the best integration we've seen on a triathlon bike.
Issue 388
canyon.com

Trek
Speed Concept SLR 9 AXS
★★★★½
£13,000 Fast and compliant, with disc brakes and all mod cons.
See 220triathlon.com
trekbikes.com

AEROBARS

You provide around 80% of the drag you endure on the bike. That's why a pair of clip-on aerobars is vital for a streamlined performance.

Van Rysel
Aptonia
★★★★☆
£39.99 Incredible-value aerobars that though aimed at long distance are better for short course.
Issue 431
decathlon.co.uk

BBB
Aerobase
★★★★☆
£64.95 Well-shaped extensions and range make these a smart clip-on introduction.
Issue 420
bbbcycling.com

Profile Design
Sonic Ergo 39A
★★★★☆
£149.99 Versatile, good-value clip-ons that are easily fitted. A multitude of configurations.
Issue 431
profile-design-eu.com

Profile Design
Subsonic Ergo 35A
★★★★½
£179.99 Great for those looking to go very low, but standard Sonics have broader appeal.
Issue 420
profile-design-eu.com

Deda
Elementi Superzero Extensions
★★★★☆
£207.99 Well-crafted and lightweight. Their stubby design isn't for all.
Issue 420
dedaelementi.com

TRI BIKE SHOES

Triathlon bike shoes are subtly, but importantly, different than cycling shoes as they contain features for a swift transition. Heel loop, rapid closure system and sole drainage holes are some of the multisport features.

Van Rysel
Aptonia
★★★½☆
£79.99 A solid shoe and a good price, though the jury's out regarding the closure zipper.
Issue 428
decathlon.co.uk

Mavic
Cosmic Elite Tri
★★★★½
£165 Comfortable shape, fine closure system and nice big pull tab for fast transitions.
Issue 428
mavic.com

DMT
KT1
★★★★½
£249.99 Phenomenal comfort, impressive breathability and very supportive.
Issue 428
chickencyclekit.co.uk

Fizik
Transiro Hydra Aeroweave Carbon
★★★★½
£289.99 A fine shoe with numerous tri-friendly features, but pricey.
Issue 428
fizik.com

Mavic
Ultimate Tri
★★★★☆
£385 Wonderfully stiff and breathable shoe but cost hard to justify for the majority.
Issue 428
mavic.com

HELMETS

Helmets are divided into road, aero road and aero. Each has its attributes, from greater ventilation to lowering drag. Note: if you go full-on aero, those benefits are lost if you can't maintain an aero position.

Van Rysel
FCR
★★★★½
£89.99 Solid aero performance and plenty of race-friendly features.
Issue 431
decathlon.co.uk

Met
Estro MIPS
★★★★☆
£120 A lean and stylish mid-range lid with added safety benefits.
Issue 412
met-helmets.com

Giro
Eclipse Spherical
★★★★½
£239.99 Great fitting mechanism and slick dial for a comfy fit.
Issue 431
giro.com

Specialized
S-Works Evade 3
★★★★½
£250 Fast, streamlined and comfortable. One of the best out there.
Issue 431
specialized.com

Abus
Gamechanger 2
★★★★☆
£289 One of the safest helmets out there plus solid aero credentials.
Issue 431
upgradebikes.co.uk

ESSENTIAL KIT

HEADPHONES

Sound quality's integral to any set of headphones but, when it comes to triathlon, safety plays a big part, too. Cue bone-conduction headphones, plus options for swimming.

Shokz
OpenRun
★★★★★
£129.95 Quality option that lets you hear the surrounding area, too.
Issue 403
uk.shokz.com

H2O
Audio Sonar Pro
★★★★½
£147 Swim- specific option with great sound and comfort.
Issue 422
h2oaudio.com

Suunto
Wing
★★★★☆
£169 Solid sound for an out-of-ear headphone; LED lights boost visibility.
Issue 425
suunto.com

Shokz
OpenSwim
★★★★☆
£169.95 Another swim-specific pair that does a solid job.
Issue 422
uk.shokz.com

Shokz
OpenFit
★★★★½
£179 Great sound and comfy, but easier to hear surroundings with others.
Issue 423
uk.shokz.com

TRAIL RUNNING SHOES

A good trail shoe features a breathable upper to aid drainage. Good traction's also vital for staying upright on undulating and muddy terrain.

Nike
Pegasus Trail 4
★★★★☆
£129.95 Flexible and decent traction, albeit not aggressive enough for proper muddy trails.
Issue 425
sportsshoes.com

Saucony
Peregrine 13
★★★★½
£130 If you're looking for an all-rounder that offers good value and decent performance, this is it.
Issue 425
saucony.com

Inov-8
Roclite G 275 V2
★★★★½
£135 A bulletproof trail shoe that's well-suited to wintery conditions and offers reasonable value.
Issue 425
inov-8.com

La Sportiva
Cyklon
★★★★½
£170 A wonderful, technical trail shoe with great traction and the reliable BOA dial.
Issue 425
lasportiva.com

Hoka
Tecton X 2
★★★★½
£185 An enjoyable, propulsive yet stable ride, though not perfect in deep, wet mud.
Issue 425
hoka.com

MILEAGE RUN SHOES

Your off-season running should include a weekly long run for aerobic conditioning, albeit don't forget occasional speedwork. All of these should fit the bill.

Inov8
Roadfly
★★★★½
£100 If you are after the same connection you feel on the trail on the road, this is for you.
Issue 435
inov8.com

Nike
Pegasus 41
★★★★½
£128.99 A reliable option for easy miles, as long as you don't mind the high heel-to-toe drop.
Issue 435
sportshoes.com

Brooks
Ghost 2 Max
★★★★★
£145 A reliable, super comfortable and robust shoe that will do wonders for your road running.
Issue 435
brooksrunning.com

New Balance
Fresh Foam 1080
★★★★★
£160 The Fresh Foam 1080 is an excellent shoe for racking up gentle miles in supreme comfort.
Issue 435
newbalance.co.uk

Saucony
Endorphin Speed 4
★★★★★
£180 A versatile, comfy and impressive shoe that's primed for pushing the pace and easy runs.
Issue 435
saucony.com

RUN JACKETS

A good run jacket will fend off the elements like wind and rain, but also deliver breathability so you don't boil in the bag. Reflectives, a hood and pockets add to its usefulness.

Keela
Saxon Jacket
★★★★☆
£109.95 Versatile and well-priced jacket, but not one for hotter or high-tempo runs.
Issue 436
keelaoutdoors.com

Montane
Cetus Lite
★★★★☆
£270 Great for deflecting winds and rain, but more for hiking than for running.
Issue 436
montane.com

Soar
All-weather jacket
★★★★½
£350 It's hard to ignore that price, but this is a formidable jacket for battling the weather.
Issue 436
salomon.com

Asics
Core jacket
★★★★½
£54 Lightweight, affordable and stylish, but not for running in really wet conditions.
Issue 436
asics.com

INOV-8
Performance Hybrid
★★★★½
£150 A well-crafted, durable and comfortable jacket. Huge versatility makes the price a bargain.
Issue 436
inov8.com

HEART RATE MONITORS

These chest or armband straps are more accurate than wrist-based optic sensors on watches. Many can be used independently or linked to a watch or smartphone.

Wahoo
Tickr
★★★★½
£39.99 Superb training tool with great connectivity and all for under £40.
Issue 435
uk.wahoofitness.com

Coros
Heart Rate Monitor
★★★½☆
£69 Straps to your arm for proven accuracy but arguably could offer more features.
Issue 435
uk.coros.com

Wahoo
Trackr
★★★★☆
£79.99 Accurate and comfy chest strap that can be recharged, but that does mean another cable.
Issue 435
uk.wahoofitness.com

Polar
H10
★★★★½
£86.50 Excellent accuracy and extremely quick to connect. Comfortable, too.
Issue 435
polar.com

Garmin
Pro Plus
★★★★☆
£119.99 Impressive chest strap that'll appeal to existing Garmin users for multisport action.
Issue 410
garmin.com

For tonnes more tri kit, head to 220tri.com

MULTISPORT WATCHES

Tech evolution's seen computers shrink to watch size. As such, you can expect GPS, heart rate, sleep measurements and a whole lot more, starting from about £200.

Coros
Pace 3
★★★★½
£219 Swift GPS, huge battery life and a wonderful price. A fine effort from Coros.
Issue 422
uk.coros.com

Garmin
Forerunner 265
★★★★½
£429.99 Great AMOLED screen displays a wealth of useful training and racing information.
Issue 422
garmin.com

Suunto
Race
★★★★½
£479 Fantastic multisport watch that comes in at a very good price point.
Issue 425
suunto.com

Apple
Watch Ultra 2
★★★★☆
£799 Apple's sport offerings continue to improve. But it'll strike your bank account.
Issue 424
apple.com

Garmin
Fenix 8
★★★★½
£949.99 Yes, that's a mortgage-threatening price but this watch packs everything and more.
Issue 435
garmin.com

TRI-SUITS

Tri-suits are vital as you can wear them from gun to finish. They should shed water nicely after exiting T1, contain a comfy chamois for the bike and be flexible come the run. Pockets are also useful.

Zone3
Activate+
★★★★½
£115 Great breathability, seam construction and internal lining cranks up this suit"s comfort.
Issue 430
zone3.com

Raceskin
Aero
★★★★½
£130 An impressive mix of tecnology and comfort at a very impressive price point.
Issue 430
raceskin.co.uk

NoPinz
Pro-1 Evo
★★★★½
£184.99 A well-priced, comfy and aero suit in multiple sizing options. A fine, fine suit.
Issue 431
nopinz.com

Zoot
Ultra Triathlon P1
★★★★½
£292 A superb suit that really excels in the heat and humidity. Might need bigger pad for Ironman.
Issue 431
zootsports.co.uk

Castelli
PR 2 Speedsuit
★★★★½
£360 A highly technical, speedy and supple suit… if you can afford the high price tag.
Issue 431
castelli-cycling.com

ENERGY GELS

These sachets of energy are useful for all disciplines, but especially the run as they're easily stowed. Many contain a mix of glucose and fructose to deliver more energy.

High5
Electrolyte Energy Gel
★★★★☆
£1.45 A great-value energy gel that delivers with no airs or graces.
Issue 422
highfive.co.uk

SiS
Go Isotonic Gel
★★★★☆
£1.67 The original isotonic gel and one that stands the test of time. Berry flavour is our pick.
Issue 422
scienceinsport.com

Torq
Cola Caffeine Gel
★★★★☆
£2.15 The caffeine version delivers a performance boost without sacrificing taste.
Issue 422
torqfitness.com

Precision
Fuel Original Gel
★★★★½
£2.25 Great consistency, appreciated neutral taste and packs away neatly.
Issue 422
precisionhydration.com

Maurten
Gel 100 Caf 100
★★★★☆
£3.21 Hydrogel formulation settles smoothly, albeit this is one costly energy hit.
Issue 422
maurten.com

SUNGLASSES

Arguably, these should be termed 'performance eyewear' as they should be worn year-round to protect from dirt flicking up from your mate's rear wheel. Wraparound models are common for great and clear peripheral vision.

Tifosi
Vogel SL
★★★★☆
£54.99 Great price for comfortable sunglasses that boost contrasts well and stay in place.
Issue 432
tifosi-optics.co.uk

Sungod
Airas
★★★★½
£140 Impressive sunglasses with class-leading field of view, but not infallible in direct light.
Issue 432
sungod.co

Smith
Motive
★★★★½
£160 If they fit you well, these are exceptional sunglasses that excel on the bike and run.
Issue 432
smithoptics.com

Koo
Alibi
★★★★☆
£169.99 Stylish, secure and great field of vision, but no case and others better in super bright light.
Issue 432
kooworld.cc

Roka
GP-1X
★★★★☆
£230 Add an extra lens for low light and these would be best on test, but they don't come cheap.
Issue 432
uk.roka.com

ELECTROLYTE TABS/ POWDERS

You lose magnesium and potassium when you sweat, plus sodium, which channels water into muscles. This lot replaces them.

Phizz
3-in-1 Formula
★★★★☆
£7.99 for 20 Not sport-specific but still 317mg sodium, plus other vitamins and minerals.
Issue 421
phizz.co

SiS
Hydro
★★★★☆
£8 for 20 Palatable offering that delivers a range of electrolytes including 345mg sodium.
Issue 421
scienceinsport.com

Precision
Hydration 1000
★★★★½
£8.99 for 10 1,000mg sodium will suit many, but 500mg and 1,500mg options available.
Issue 421
precisionhydration.com

Skratch
Labs Hydration
★★★★☆
£27.95 for 20 Sodium content comes in at 380mg. Tastes good, but not cheap.
Issue 421
silverfish-uk.com

Styrkr
SLT05 Caffeine+
★★★½☆
£9.99 for six Solid product with 360mg sodium, but minimal caffeine content.
Issue 421
styrkr.com

SAVE OVER £29 ON YOUR FIRST 6 ISSUES

GET FIT FOR LIFE

STRONGER, FITTER, FASTER
164-page workout special
Men's Fitness
UK EDITION
BLITZ YOUR BELLY
Simple circuits for serious results
34 QUICK KIT-FREE SESSIONS FOR MAXIMUM MUSCLES
NEW WAYS
LER
BE A CARDIO KING
Workouts to get you fit, fast
12 MUST-DO MOVES
CIRCUIT TRAINING
WORKOUT TERMS EXPLAINED

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Men's Fitness is for anyone who wants to look good and feel great. Each issue brings you original and in-depth features spanning the full spectrum of fitness and mental health. You'll also find PT-approved workouts, from strength sessions to fat-blasting bodyweight circuits; expert advice on every aspect of resistance training; nutrition know-how to help you fuel your fitness and recover right; and exclusive interviews with the best in the business.

GREAT REASONS TO SUBSCRIBE

- Save over £29 on your first 6 issues*
- Expert advice to build your best body, with scalable workouts and nutrition know-how
- Never miss an issue of your must-have magazine
- Get each issue delivered direct to your door in 100% plastic-free packaging
- Receive the free weekly e-newsletter**

VISIT SHOP.KELSEY.CO.UK/MFPGB25
OR CALL 01959 543747 and quote code MFPGB25
Scan our QR code – the easiest & quickest way!

SCAN HERE

HOTLINE OPEN: MONDAY-FRIDAY, 8.30AM-5.30PM. CALLS ARE CHARGED AT YOUR STANDARD NETWORK RATE

Terms & Conditions: *UK Direct Debit offer only. You will pay £22.50 for your first 6 issues, then £47.99 every 12 months via Direct Debit. Savings based on the standard basic rate which includes the cover price of £5.99 plus Kelsey Media's standard postage and packing price per single issue for 6 months. Offer ends 30th December 2025. Your subscription will start with the next available issue, and you will receive 12 issues in a year. Prices correct at time of print and subject to change. If you decide to cancel your subscription, we will put a stop to any further payments being taken and will send the remaining issues that you have already paid for. ** Data protection: We take great care in handling your personal details and these will only ever be used as set out in our privacy policy which can be viewed at shop.kelsey.co.uk/privacy-policy. You may unsubscribe at any time. For full terms and conditions visit shop.kelsey.co.uk/terms.

TRAINING

BOOST YOUR PERFORMANCE - *TODAY!*

"To misquote John Lennon, life is what happens when you're making Ironman plans..."

GETTY IMAGES

P76

IRONMAN IN 6 MONTHS PART 2: BIKE TRAINING

MATT BAIRD

Matt is training for Ironman Wales in Tenby and this month seeks bike advice from a number of coaches.

P83

PERFECT RACE-WEEK RECIPES

KATE PERCY

is a food for fitness expert and amateur athlete She's written three books on sports nutrition and founded Go Bites

GET READY FOR IRONMAN

PART 3: CONQUER THE BIKE

180KM! 112 MILES! WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL IT, AN IRONMAN BIKE LEG IS A MIGHTILY LONG WAY. HERE'S HOW TIME-CRUNCHED AGE-GROUPERS CAN CONQUER THIS LEGENDARY MULTISPORT DISTANCE THIS SEASON AND BEYOND

WORDS MATT BAIRD **IMAGES** GETTY / SHUTTERSTOCK

GETTY IMAGES

> *"Half-term, deadlines and the end of the football season meant I struggled to get out on the bike!"*

Mention the Ironman bike leg to any triathlon novice and watch as their jaw drops and their mind is blown. Some 180km (112-miles) after a 3.8km swim and before a marathon run? It's the stuff of endurance sporting legend; a distance first attempted at Ironman Hawaii in 1978 and still the M-Dot standard some 47 years later.

With great distances come great challenges, however, especially when relentless winds (Ironman Lanzarote), extreme heat and humidity (Kona), and hills (Wales) are further obstacles to overcome. Aerodynamics, fuelling, efficiency, comfort, power output and more are all components that triathletes should seek to improve. And that's before we go into trying to find a hotel on race weekend that doesn't require you to sell that Cervélo to fund it.

While that 180km distance is never to be sniffed at, thankfully Ironman training has become more simple and efficient over time due to advancements in training metrics, increased research on personalised nutrition and the indoor training revolution through gamification apps.

Here, with the help of pro triathlete Fred Funk, top coach and age-grouper Graham Wadsworth and the scientists at Precision Fuel & Hydration, is how you can prep for any Ironman bike leg this season and beyond, and how our time-poor age-grouper is slowly turning the training corner…

▲ Conditions in Tenby can be notoriously tough, with windy coastline in the mix.

MATT'S STATS

HOW OUR WRITER HAS FARED IN THIS MONTH

Swim: 6km (3.5km in April)
Outdoor bike: 90km (120km)
Indoor bike: 9hrs (7.5hrs)
Run: 45km (62km)
Vo2 Max: 50 (50)
BMI: 23.9 (24)

GETTY IMAGES

T100

▲ Pro Fred Funk in his own pain cave... He recommends indoor training for time efficiency.

BEAT THE BOREDOM

To misquote John Lennon, life is what happens when you're busy making Ironman plans. Half-term holidays, work deadlines and the end of the football season (come on you Spurs!) this month meant that I struggled to get outdoors on the bike much at all, so the indoor trainer was a godsend for sneaking in hour sets at lunch and weekends. Perhaps surprisingly, yet thankfully, the brilliantly named pro triathlete Fred Funk doesn't chastise me too much for my 'indoors-good' bike ethos.

"To really get the maximum benefit out of only 5-6hr bike training per week, I'd do the majority of my riding indoors using Rouvy's endless portfolio of routes [including Ironman Wales]. I'd also only perform short sessions with intensity to maximise efficiency. With Rouvy you can explore the outdoors and race-specific courses from the comfort of your home and follow their great training plans and sessions to beat that boredom and let the time fly by."

INDOOR VS OUTDOORS

As someone who previously despised indoor riding, I've now turned into the age-grouper version of Lionel Sanders, only without the monstrous wattage and cult-hero status. It's convenient and targeted, especially as it takes me 15-minutes to escape the city on my road bike.

"In the winter I do 80% of my riding indoors and in the summer around 20%," says Funk. "Even if it's good weather, I train indoors for specific sessions because, first of all, it's very time-efficient – I have a training room where everything is already set up and I just have to get on my bike and pedal. Secondly, there are no distractions like annoying wind, traffic and it's not weather-dependant. Finally, indoor training is super-efficient because you never stop pedalling, unlike outside. Thanks to Rouvy, I can even explore places and routes virtually I've never been to in my life and that's even better than riding the same loop outside at home for the hundredth time."

TWO-WHEEL FOCUS

While the indoor bike benefits are clear, I'm all-too-aware that I need to get the road bike miles in on the bike before Tenby, including regularly getting to the steep climbs of Somerset's Mendip Hills and ideally getting to Pembrokeshire itself for some on-course prep.

"Place a definite emphasis on the bike," says Graham Wadsworth of the Bristol-based personal trainers, My Life PT (mylifept.co.uk). "Ironman Wales is a course that rewards strong bike resilience and putting in the hilly miles. On limited time this is tricky, so look for lots of elevation on your training rides. With your time of 10hrs per week – not to mention your history of overuse injuries from running – I'd aim to complete at least 50% of your ▸

GETTY IMAGES

▲ Superb crowd support is one of the benefits of a hilly bike course!

training time on the bike. And, if the bike is your weakness, then don't be afraid by doing some weeks of 80-90% bike training to make some real gains on the bike while just maintaining the other disciplines."

MULTI-DISCIPLINE SETS

My indoor bike training setup is taking shape, but a gym in summertime is a step too far for me so I've invested in a Gym Pro Luxe indoor gym set (gymproluxestore.com) for building some much-needed strength and conditioning into my tri-training routine.

"We're all multi-discipline athletes and changing between activities is one of the unique features of triathlon," advises Wadsworth, who ranks Tenby up there with Challenge Roth in terms of Iron-distance atmosphere. "Set yourself up with an indoor bike next to gym equipment and/or a treadmill. An example of a 45min indoor training session could breakdown like this: 5mins gym strength work; 5mins indoor bike; 5mins treadmill; repeat three times. It's something different to normal training and the combination of strength and aerobic work is useful for triathletes at any distance."

"Also make use of the downtime and use the recovery periods in training," adds Wadsworth, who balances his pointy-end age-group feats with having a family. "Plan the big sessions and then the rest afterwards, which is key for Ironman training, and make sure you use the recovery periods to give time and energy back to your family after you've been doing your training."

IS HILLY HARDER?

Some 2,685m of elevation gain. The Ironman Wales bike stats don't lie – this is a demanding bike course that's up there with Ironman Lanzarote as the hilliest official Ironman route (the XTRI likes of Norseman and Blacklake go even higher, but that's a story for another season).

Funk, who finished second at the Ironman 70.3 Worlds in 2023, is undeterred, however, and offers an alternative view to the accepted hillier is harder view. "Hillier long-distance courses are actually 'easier' than flat courses because you can get out of that aero position, use different muscle groups on the uphills and recover on the downhills. To prepare for it specifically the best is simply to practise riding hills," is his advice. I picked the UK Ultimate as my one and only previous Iron-distance attempt due to its pancake-flat sub-1,000m of elevation course and can understand Funk's thinking, as it boasted few sections for out-of-the-saddle efforts and plenty of extended bottom-on-saddle passages.

KEY BIKE BUYS

Matt's top buys for a long-distance bike leg

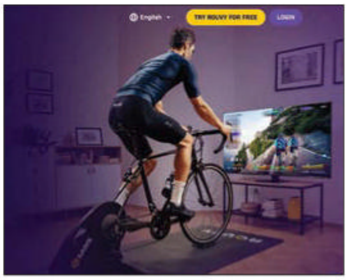
QUOC ESCAPE ROAD £130

Laces aren't for tri? I get it, but I love the comfort these lightweight, carbon composite-soled shoes bring, and they're also pretty darn stylish in that white colourway. **quoc.cc**

ROUVY SUBSCIPTION

£10.75 PER MONTH

Rouvy's Ironman partnership ensures that you can ride numerous 90 and 180km bike courses, including Ironman Wales, on the platform. **rouvy.com**



PRECISION FUEL & HYDRATION

£8.99 (PACK OF 4)

A packet of these tasty chews offers 30g of carbs, which helps you keep track of your training and racing intake. Refreshing, too. **precisionhydration.**

> *"Hillier iron courses are 'easier' than flat as you can get out of the aero position"*

▲ Fred Funk bossing it on the bike during a T100 race.

As for training my body for sitting on a saddle for eight hours? "Train a lot and use plenty of chamois cream," is Funk's succinct advice.

GUT TRAINING

After transitions, nutrition is oft-cited as the fifth triathlon discipline and I know, after vomiting towards the end of my last Iron-distance race, that I need to nail this ahead of Tenby. I book a private sweat test and heat chamber session at Precision Fuel and Hydration (precisionhydration.com) in Dorset to discover how much sodium is lost in my sweat and how it will accordingly change my fuelling intake, and how carbohydrate consumption and replenishing stores of glycogen are essential for endurance sports success (read more in two edition's time).

Lindsey Hunt, the senior sports scientist at Precision, recommends that I'll need to consume 60-75g of carbs per hour (four or five of PH's clearly labelled 15g energy chews) for both Tenby and my chief preparation event, the Croyde Ocean Triathlon in July. I'll need to train my gut to do that beforehand, however, by ingesting those amounts during training rides and runs.

"In the race I try to aim for 120g carbohydrates per hour on the bike in the form of liquid carbs in bottles and gels," adds Funk. "This needs to be trained well otherwise it can lead to stomach issues."

LACE IT UP

Comfortable kit is crucial for any triathlon, mandatory for all long-distance races. An ill-fitting wetsuit collar, poorly behaved tri-suit zipper or ropey heel counter can be problematic for sprint races, disastrous for Ironman. An extra bonus is looking stylish as well. Which is why I'll be wearing a pair of Quoc's Escape Road (£130) bike shoes. They have laces, a rare sight on any triathlon course, but I love the comfort – and lack of hotspots – that laced-bike shoes provide. Admittedly, fiddling with the laces will cost me a few seconds in both transitions, but the aerodynamic benefits from the lack of dials might even make that time back over my expected eight hours in the saddle. And, in their all-white guise, they look pretty darn cool as well.

I've already chosen to ride in the bargain Giro Agilis MIPS (£99.99) road helmet, my favourite bike helmet of all-time, and one that offers comfort, ventilation for hilly rides and some trickledown tech from Giro's top-end lids.

My chosen saddle is a Prologo Kapa RS saddle, my regular platform that I know my perineum can handle having spent 10 hours on it for the Lake District's infamous Fred Whitton Challenge sportive in 2021. I can't stress how much getting a couple of professional bike fits over my tri career have helped both my cycling comfort, aerodynamics and efficiency as well, including the chance to try an array of saddles to find the best one for long-distance comfort. Also studying the pads of tri-suits online or ideally in-person will also reap the racing rewards.

▼ Bike set-up is an important element of preparing for long-distance tri.

PREP FOR PUNCTURES

As I'm not shy of telling anyone who'll listen, I would have broken the eight-hour barrier on my last Iron-distance attempt if I wasn't hampered by a severe puncture at the 160km mark on the UK Ultimate Triathlon's bike leg. I was forced to push, wobble and ride on the rim for the last 20km of the bike leg, which probably contributed an hour to my overall 15:30hr finish time. For Ironman Wales – where my margins for making the swim bike leg's combined 10:30hr cut-off are so tight – I'm going tubeless and coming added with a host of tubeless plugs, spare tubes and something approaching the knowledge of how to use them. If nothing else, it'll improve my mid-bike mindset and lower my fears of hitting every thorn on the roads of Pembrokeshire. 220

Next month we'll be focussing on the Ironman run, including staying injury-free, vital pacing advice and just how far you need to run ahead of Ironman race day.

220 TRIATHLON

Kelsey Media
The Granary, Downs Court, Yalding Hill,
Yalding, Kent ME18 6EL
Tel 01959 543747
Email 220triathlon.ed@kelsey.co.uk
Web www.220triathlon.com
twitter.com/220Triathlon
facebook.com/220Triathlon

EDITORIAL

Editor Helen Webster
Art Editor Xavier Robleda

ADVERTISING

Investment Manager Jack Greenwell
jack@talk-media.uk

MANAGEMENT

CEO Steve Kendall
Publishing Director Mark Winterton
Print Production Controller Hayley Brown
Retail Director Steve Brown
Head of Direct Consumer Revenue Helen Knight

BECOME PART OF THE GROWING *220* COMMUNITY BY SUBSCRIBING TODAY! *p22*

GETTY IMAGES

BASIC ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION RATES
UK= £104.88 EU = £128.88 North America = £128.88 ROW = £140.88

For our latest subscription offers, visit **shop.kelsey.co.uk**
or **call 01959 543 747**

If you need the customer services details, please see below,
Email **cs@kelsey.co.uk**
Call **01959 543 747**
Lines open Mon-Fri 8.30am - 5.30pm
Visit **help.kelsey.co.uk**

ISSUE 445 CONTRIBUTORS
Matthew Baird, Liz Barrett, Ed Broadley, Sarah Broadley, Martyn Brunt, Tim Heming, Getty Images, Ironman Media, Kate Milsom, Kate Percy, Professional Triathletes Organisation, Steve Shrubsall, Rob Slade, Supertri, World Triathlon, James Witts

KELSEYmedia

Issue 445 September 2025
On sale 25 July 2025

© Kelsey Media

ISSN: 14791500

220 Triathlon is published
by Kelsey Media

Cover image: Getty Images

Every care is taken when compiling this magazine, but we accept no liability for mistakes and no responsibility can be taken for the contents of these pages.

Printed in the UK by William Gibbons
Distributed by Frontline

To give feedback about our magazines, please visit kelsey.co.uk.

NEXT MONTH

On sale – 22 August

YO, YO, YO! SAM LONG

Catching up with the American smashing long distance *and* high volume

LESSONS FROM A TRAINING CAMP

How much can you gain from a week of intense training? We sent a would-be Ironman to find out

SMASH THE IRONMAN RUN

Want to perform on the run rather than just hanging on..? We've got all the advice you need!

ON TEST

Summer special! Swimsuits, jammers and the best sunglasses for running

NUTRITION

RACE-WEEK RECIPES

To optimise your race-day performance you need to hit that start line with just the right amount of glyogen in store. And to do that, you'll need these four recipes...

IMAGES THE SECRET STUDIO

Preparing nutritionally for an event is a complicated business. Google what to do and you'll find conflicting advice about what and how much to eat. Everybody has an opinion! The fact is, what works for one doesn't work so well for another. Our bodies react to competition in different ways, so it's important to develop your personal strategy during training. The theory is that you want to supercharge your muscles so they're ready for the race of their life! Tapering contributes towards this; carbs are converted into blood glucose and used for energy, or stored as glycogen in the liver and muscle.

You'll be jittery and desperate to squeeze in a few more miles, but reducing the length and intensity of your training in the week before your race will enable your body to store the glycogen normally used to fuel your exercise.

You can only store enough carbohydrate to keep you going for approximately 90 minutes, after which it resorts to burning fat reserves for energy. So there's no point overloading on the carbs. That will just make you feel bloated and bilious. Instead, try increasing intake by around 10% over the three to four days leading up to the race. This, combined with the reduction in your training, will help you start out with the maximum amount of glycogen in your body. Practise with these four great recipes.

First up, this P-Beetroot porridge. You've got the perfect combo of performance-enhancing beetroot with carb-rich porridge oats, plus the anti-inflammatory effect of the almonds and spices. Beetroot in porridge works. Trust me!

Next, a Tropical power punch for those who can't face a pre-race breakfast. Boosted with oats and chia seeds, this carb-rich smoothie is easy to make, easy to drink and easy on the stomach.

Spaghetti with fresh herbs is ideal the night before a race. With 75g carbohydrate, 18g protein, 17g fat and 5g fibre per portion, it's tasty, simple and well-balanced.

Finally, Banana malt loaf bars make a nutrient-rich snack for the days leading up to race day, and race day itself and they don't get stuck in your teeth like the shop-bought variety!

Sports nutrition cook and keen amateur athlete Kate Percy set up the #GoFaster campaign in 2009 and, following the publication of several sports nutrition books, now produces a range of all-natural energy balls, Go Bites (katepercys.com).

SPAGHETTI WITH FRESH HERBS

PREP 5mins **COOK** 12mins **SERVES** 4

INGREDIENTS • 400g spaghetti • 4tbsps extra virgin olive oil • 2 cloves garlic, crushed • 1 dried chilli, crushed • 4 canned anchovy fillets, finely chopped • Grated zest of 1 lemon • 150g fresh herbs, chopped (any combo will do – parsley, basil, chives, mint, oregano, marjoram) • Grated parmesan to serve

METHOD

1 Bring a large pan of salted water to the boil and cook the spaghetti according to pack instructions. In a large non-stick frying pan, sweat the garlic in the olive oil over a very low heat for a minute.

2 Add the chilli, lemon zest, anchovies and herbs and stir until the herbs have wilted.

3 When cooked, drain the spaghetti, reserving some of the cooking liquid to prevent the pasta from sticking together. Add the spaghetti to the herby mixture and toss well to combine.

4 Serve with the parmesan cheese and freshly ground black pepper. This goes really well with a fresh tomato and basil salad.

TROPICAL POWER PUNCH

PREP 5mins **COOK** N/A **SERVES** 2

INGREDIENTS • 1tbsp jumbo rolled oats • 1tbsp chia seeds • 500ml pineapple juice • Pack of frozen banana, mango and pineapple • 2tbsps natural yoghurt • Squeeze lime juice

METHOD

1 Put all the ingredients into a blender and blend until smooth.

2 Check the consistency, adding more pineapple juice if too thick.

3 Pour into two long glasses and drink immediately.

P-BEETROOT PORRIDGE

PREP 5mins **COOK** 10mins **SERVES** 2

INGREDIENTS • Handful almonds • 60g jumbo rolled oats • 250ml beetroot juice • 200ml water • 1/2tsp cinnamon • pinch of salt • 1 apple, cored and finely sliced • 1cm fresh ginger, peeled and grated• 2tsps chia seeds • 2tsps honey (optional)

METHOD

1 Pre-heat the oven to 180°C and lightly roast the almonds for 5mins. Remove from oven and set aside. Roughly chop the almonds once cool enough to handle.

2 Bring the oats, beetroot juice and water to boil in a small pan.

3 Reduce the heat to a simmer, stirring the porridge frequently over a low heat for about 5mins until thick, creamy and pink! Add more beetroot juice or water to get the consistency you like, as oats differ in their absorbency. Add the salt and cinnamon halfway through cooking.

4 Pour the porridge into warmed bowls and top with the apple, ginger, chia seeds and honey (the beetroot is pretty sweet without so you may not need this).

BANANA MALT LOAF BARS

PREP 5mins **FREEZE** 12min **SERVES** 4

INGREDIENTS • 100ml strong tea • 50g dates • 75g dried cherries • 50g apricots • 25g fiery dried ginger • 100g sultanas • 150g malt extract (plus extra for the glaze) • 50g dark brown sugar • 2 large eggs • 2 ripe bananas, mashed • 250g plain flour • 1 1/2tsp baking powder • 1/2tsp bicarbonate of soda • Pinch salt • 3tsps ground ginger • 1tsp ground cinnamon

METHOD

1 Pre-heat oven to 160°C. Grease and line a 20cm square baking tray with parchment paper. Roughly chop the dried fruit.

2 Brew the tea in a small bowl and add the dried fruit while still hot. Remove teabag.

3 Beat together the malt extract and sugar until pale and creamy, then beat in the eggs. Stir in the bananas, tea and fruit.

4 Combine the flour with the baking powder, bicarbonate of soda, ground ginger, cinnamon and salt. Fold into the wet mixture. When combined, transfer to baking dish and bake for 45-50mins.

5 While still warm, brush with more malt extract. Leave to cool in the tin. 220

GŴYL BWYD A DIOD CAERDYDD YN DY
CROESOCAERDYDD.COM/
CARDIFF FOOD D DRINK FESTIVAL
ITCARDIFF.COM/FO
RUN OUT
RHEDEG ALLAN
HIGH5 SPORTS NUTRITION
HUUB
SUPERfeet

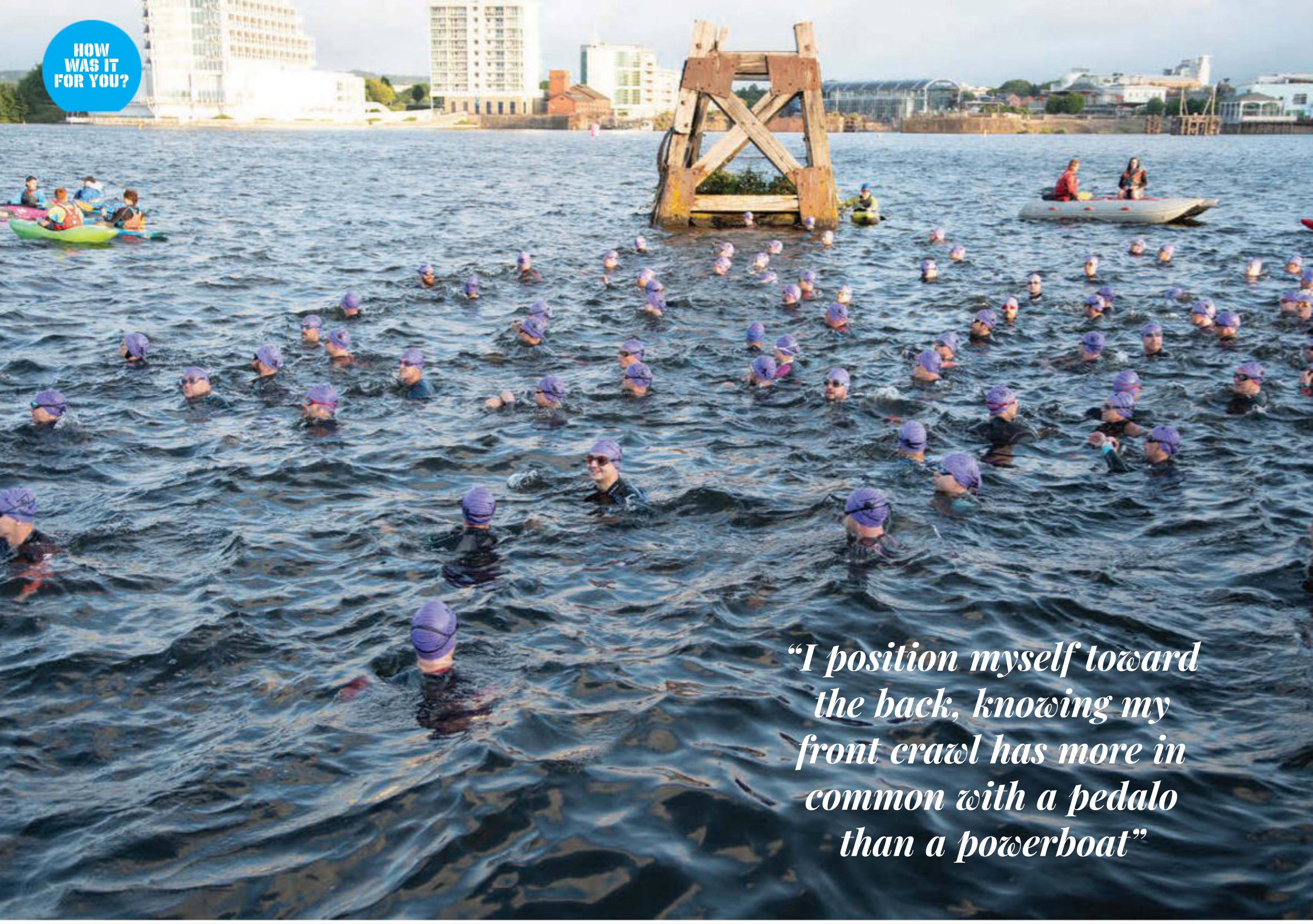
…YCHWELYD 27-29 MEH 2025
…BWYD-DIOD
… RETURNS 27-29 JUN 2025
…OD-DRINK
CROESO CAERDYDD VISIT CARDIFF
…CHAMPIONSHIPS

HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

GONE IN 60 SECONDS

Overheating and underprepared, former 220 Triathlon staffer Rob Slade returns to racing with an Olympic-distance race in the Welsh capital… and finds comfort in the discomfort.

WORDS ROB SLADE **IMAGES** GWYNFOR JAMES



"I position myself toward the back, knowing my front crawl has more in common with a pedalo than a powerboat"

MEET ROB SLADE

220's former content editor Rob has been running, cycling and hiking since he was a teenager, but pulled on the tri-suit for the first time in 2021. Since then, he's raced everything from supersprint triathlon up to half Ironman.

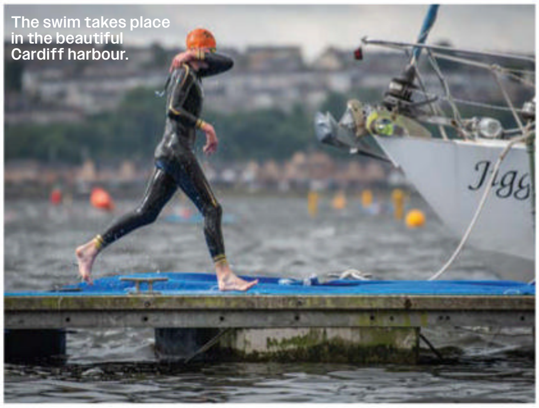
"Jesus, my butt hurts," I say to myself as I return the saddle after a short climb. I knew I should've given the tri-suit a few extra outings in the run-up to this race. It's not that I haven't worn it before. It's accompanied me for most of the races I've done over the last few years and throughout my spell working on this very magazine, but this time I'm using a different saddle and it is not a happy partnership. Fortunately, this isn't race day, just my pre-race brick session one week out, so I switch back to my previous saddle when I get home and pray that a short mid-week ride a few days later will return happier results. Not that I ever expect to be comfortable during a triathlon. I've made peace with that. It's more a case of finding comfort in the discomfort.

For me, triathlon has always been about completion rather than competing. I've never been particularly good at sport (I actively avoided it back in school), but I enjoy type two fun and am motivated by a new challenge. That's both a blessing and a curse. It means I don't beat myself up if I don't finish with a competitive time, but it also means I often only do just enough training to get myself round the course. Add bouts of winter bugs and niggling knees and you've got a less-than-ideal run-up to the Olympic-distance race at Cardiff Triathlon. That said, I knew I was capable of getting the job done and I was looking forward to 'racing' on closed roads – kudos to organisers Always Aim High Events for sorting that one out.

PRAYING TO THE WEATHER GODS

It might not have quite been the hottest June on record, but at times it's certainly felt like it could be. I imagine you probably check the weather as much as I do before a race day, though more often than not that's because you're praying for no rain. This time, though, it's because I have no desire whatsoever to race in the sweltering heat. The day before turns out to be the hottest day of the year so far, with the mercury steaming past 30°C. Luckily, conditions were set to change overnight, bringing the temperature down to around 20°C and adding some desirable cloud cover.

One thing that I'd seemingly blocked out since last racing in 2023 (the less said about the knee troubles of 2024, the better) was the early starts. Somehow, I'd let



The swim takes place in the beautiful Cardiff harbour.

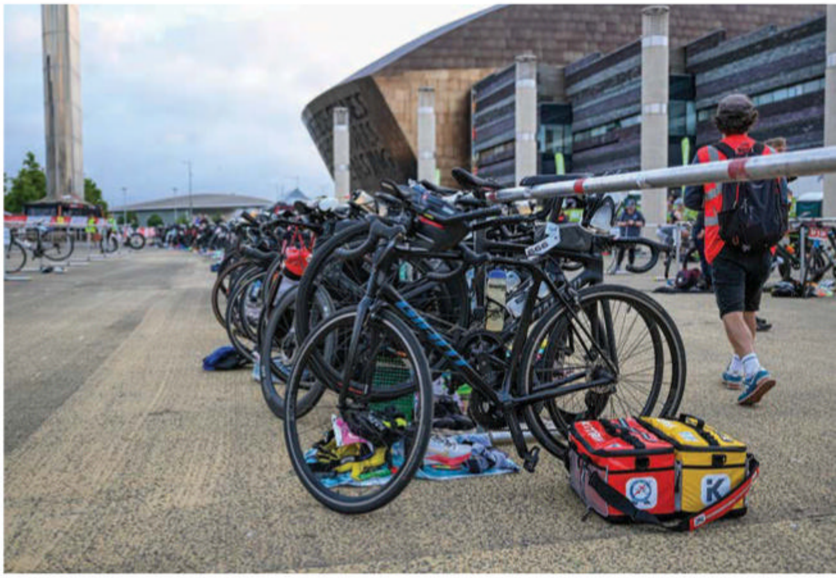
my subconscious lure me into a false assumption that the race wouldn't be starting all that early. And 7.20am isn't terrible, but with the drive across from Bristol and transition to set up, it means a 4am alarm and a 4.45am departure. With the summer solstice taking part the day before, the sun rises with me, and it's bright and breezy by the time I make it to Cardiff. When I say breezy, we're talking 15-17mph winds, but I don't think too much of it, set up in transition and then join the loo queue.

Ready as I'll ever be, I walk 500m to the swim start in Cardiff's freshwater bay, enjoying the onshore breeze as I go. Looking at the water during the swim briefing, it looks reasonably calm, but that assertion doesn't hold up for long. I'm in the fourth wave and the 1,500m, point-to-point swim has us starting in the water. I position myself toward the back of the bunch knowing that my front crawl has more in common with a pedalo than a powerboat.

PUNCH DRUNK

I was hoping for a chance to acclimatise to the water temperature before the swim starts but as I clamber in I realise it's not really necessary – it feels like a tepid bath. I quickly adjust my goggles as the countdown gets underway and 20 seconds later all hell breaks loose with the classic washing machine experience. Arms and legs fly everywhere, with people mixing front crawl and breaststroke due to the congestion. I make several attempts to tuck in behind people but repeatedly get thrown off course by other swimmers coming through or slowing up ahead. Someone swims over me and then the pack mercifully starts to string out. Instead of being hit in the face by flailing limbs, I'm now being smashed by the chop. I assume it's the wake from a boat or the result of dozens of triathletes turning on the afterburners, but nope, it looks like the wind is having more of an impact on conditions than I had expected.

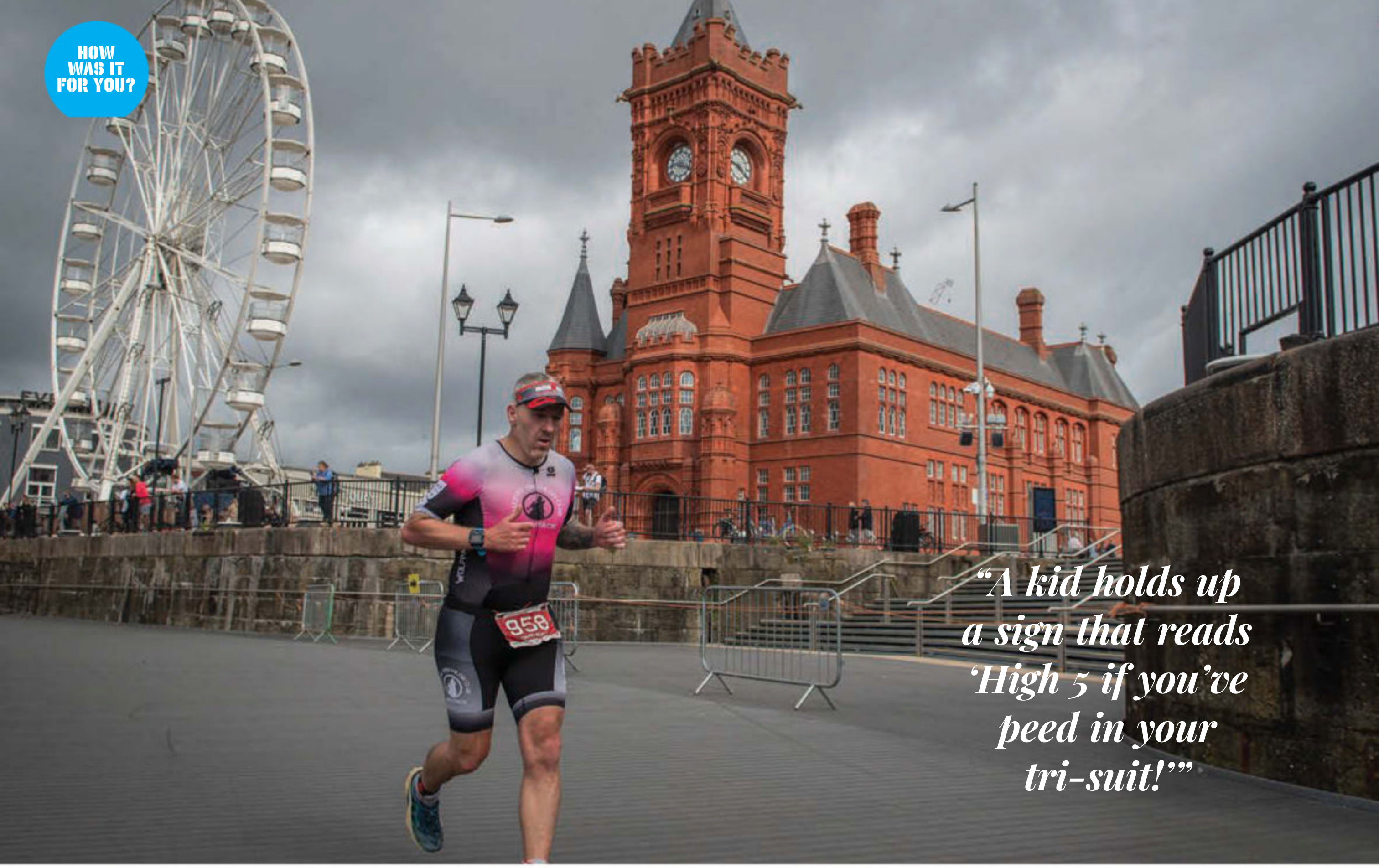
The rolling water makes sighting tricky, but between the blue swim caps strewn out ahead and the occasional buoy popping out above the water I'm able to stay vaguely on course. The rolling surface make it hard to get into much of a rhythm, but more frustrating than that is the chap swimming next to me who moves ahead doing front crawl and then switches to breaststroke and slows, kicking me in the face… ►



▲ With transition in the quayside, there's plenty of chance to sightsee.

WELSH TRIATHLON ACADEMY
WILLIAMS
GBR

◄ Paratriathlete Darren Williams was back to tri after a challenge in May saw him hand-cycling the length of Wales.



"A kid holds up a sign that reads 'High 5 if you've peed in your tri-suit!'"

repeatedly. Thankfully, after reaching the furthest buoy and turning back to shore we're swimming with the wind, so the water doesn't lift me up and crash my face into the water so much. Because of the limited visibility (and my very mediocre swimming abilities), my mind quickly turns to my race position as I approach the jetty. Am I going to be last?

FAST AND FURIOUS

Clambering onto the pontoon I decide not to turn around for a look to see how many people are behind me, but I rub shoulders with others as I trot into T1. Transition goes smooth enough as I pull on my bike kit and totter out. "Bet I'm the only one on a gravel bike," I say to myself. Brooding clouds gather overhead as I started pushing the pedals. My legs feel heavy and there's a headwind to start with, but this being a four-lap bike course, I knew I'd benefit from the breeze as much as I'd curse it on the way out to the turnaround point.

The legs soon loosen up and I'm able to settle into a steady pace, but as soon as I do people start zooming right past me. Lots of them. They appear over my shoulder in a shot and then they're gone in 60 seconds. It makes me feel sluggish, but it's a feeling I have to get accustomed to, as the course consists of 10km loops. Those guys flying past me on their expensive triathlon bikes? They'll be coming past again. Alongside the Olympic event, there's also a middle-distance race (featuring nine loops on the bike) that started earlier, plus a sprint and supersprint starting after. It makes for a busy course and keeps things interesting, particularly if you like to get drawn into little battles with similarly-paced athletes. It's a good thing, too, as the course isn't all that exciting visually, taking you through urban streets and past retail parks.

It's undoubtedly a fast course without any major inclines, though, and there are plenty of corners (including a dead turn) to throw in some excitement. Despite moving at lower speeds than a lot of others, I enjoy hitting corners at pace, safe in the knowledge that I don't have to watch out for cars. It even makes

▲ The run is slightly shorter than usual at 9km, plus it's a fast and flat route.

▼ The suburban scenery on the bike course is made up for by the speedy times possible.

CAMU I'R COPA ALWAYS AIM HIGH events
WWW.ALWAYSAIMHIGHE
09:1

▲ Finishing back in the bay means great support.

me feel somewhat like an actual athlete, at least fleetingly. At one point I even see another bloke on a gravel bike, though sadly he passes without answer to my cheery wave. My Canyon Grail obviously isn't built for triathlon, but it's getting me round the course well enough – it's also the only bike I own.

Once the athletes from the pointy end of the field stop flying by, I turn my attention to nutrition, eagerly awaiting the chance to consume another energy chew and washing it down with an electrolyte mix. While the skies are getting darker and it isn't as hot as the days before, it's still warm. Thankfully, the last-minute saddle switch hasn't battered my backside, but I'm still glad to be climbing out of the saddle as I finish my fourth and final lap.

STEADY AS HE GOES

I feel like Bambi on ice as I slide my way round the corner and into transition on the tips of my cleats, but make it safely to my small slice of tarmac. Around me, kit is lying everywhere as if it's a teenager's bedroom. My bike's space on the rail has shrunk since I was last here and it requires careful hands to rack it again. Transition goes smoothly aside from that, though, and I give myself a pat on the back for doing so well despite not racing for 18 months.

The run route is where the scenery improves and I imagine that with blue skies the sea looks less murky and the sandbanks less muddy. I head out much quicker than my target pace and spend the first 10 minutes trying to rein myself in. The jelly legs are notably absent and I feel alright as I settle in. The course takes us on an out-and-back loop, with a very vocal young volunteer with a bell acting as the most amazing hype woman I've ever seen at a race. Even the heavy downpour fails to dampen her spirits. For us competitors, the rainfall is absolutely welcome.

Unlike most standard-distance races, we've only got 9km of rather flat ground to cover today, which I belatedly remember midway through my second and final run lap (a beautiful feeling, I must admit). The knowledge puts an extra pep in my step and I push on, aware that I'll soon be able to enjoy a celebratory pint. Several kids hold a sign aloft that reads: "High 5 if you've peed in your tri-suit." I wish I'd read it the first time round, as I wouldn't have slapped hands quite so enthusiastically. I don't have long to dwell on it, though, as I'm onto my last 300m. I push the pace and my quads start to burn. At least I know I've put plenty into this.

I cross the finish line at a sprint with arms outstretched, spurred on by the crowd and MC putting decent energy into the finish line celebrations. I dive into the snacks on the table for a dash of savoury and sweet and munch away. I soon get a text with my time, but hardly pay attention. I came to have fun and, even with the usual discomfort, it's mission accomplished. 220

220 2025 RACE CALENDAR

PICK YOUR RACES AND PLAN YOUR SEASON WITH THE 220 EVENT GUIDE

SWYD SPRINT TRI

7 SEPTEMBER 2025

Head to Barry Island in Wales for a fun, friendly, coastal Sprint triathlon. Tidy!

● EUROPEAN CHAMPS QUALIFIER ● WORLD CHAMPS QUALIFIER

JULY

26-27 OUTLAW TRIATHLON WEEKEND
(various distances and events)
National Water Sports Centre, Nottingham. Nottinghamshire.
outlawtriathlon.com

27 IRONMAN LEEDS
(3.8km S/180km b/42.2km R)
Leeds, Yorkshire.
ironman.com

ETON DORNEY SPRINT TRIATHLON (🟢 SPRINT)
(750m S/20km B/5km R)
Dorney Lake, Windsor *dbmax.co.uk*

AUGUST

6 CAPERNWRAY SPRINT TRI/AQUA EVENING SERIES
(various distances and events)
Capernwray Dive Centre, Carnforth.
t2.events

13 SWMA EVENING SERIES
(various dists)
The Lake, Cromhall Quarry, Cromhall, Nr Bristol
trimaxevents.com

16 YORK KIDS FUN TRIATHLON
(various dists)
York Sports Village, York.
uktriathlon.co.uk

17 BLITHFIELD TRIATHLON (🔴 AQUABIKE)
(various distances and events)
Blithfield Reservoir Staffordshire.
pma-racing.co.uk

YORK TRIATHLON
(various dists)
York Sports Village, York. *uktriathlon.co.uk*

31 SHROPSHIRE TRIATHLON
(various dists)
The Mere, Cremorne Gardens, Ellesmere.
uktriathlon.co.uk

SHROPSHIRE MIDDLE DISTANCE
(middle distance)
The Mere, Cremorne Gardens, Ellesmere.
uktriathlon.co.uk

BRIGHTON AND HOVE TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Hove Lawns, Brighton.
brightonandhovetriathlon.com

SEPTEMBER

6 CAPERNWRAY SPRINT TRI/AQUA EVENING SERIES
(various distances and events)
Capernwray Dive Centre, Carnforth.
t2.events

7 SWYD SPRINT TRIATHLON (🔴 SPRINT)
(750m S/20km B/5km R)
Barry Island, Wales.
allornothingevents.com

DORNEY DUATHLON

4 OCTOBER 2025

Yes, it's time to enter your autumn races already! ATW events have this duathlon.

IRONMAN 70.3 WEYMOUTH

14 SEPTEMBER 2025

Will this year be millpond-smooth water or choppy waves?! Either way, you'll have a great day out on the south coast!

GETTY

FLEET FEET TRIATHLETES (🔴 STANDARD)
(1.5km S/42km B/10km R)
Knockburn Loch, Aberdeen, Scotland.
fleet-feet.com

NEWBURY TRIATHLON
(300m S (pool)/22km B/5km R)
Newbury.
triathlon@newburyvelo.cc

10 **SWMA EVENING SERIES**
(various dists)
The Lake, Cromhall Quarry, Cromhall, Nr Bristol
trimaxevents.com

13 **NORTH WEST KIDS FUN DUATHLON**
(various distances)
Barony Park, Nantwich
.uktriathlon.co.uk

14 **IRONMAN 70.3 WEYMOUTH**
(1900m S/90km b/21.1km R)
Weymouth, Dorset.
ironman.com

CHELTENHAM TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Sandford Parks Lido, Cheltenham, Glos.
sandfordparkslido.org

NORTH WEST TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Barony Park, Nantwich
uktriathlon.co.uk

21 **IRONMAN WALES**
(3.8km S/180km b/42.2km R)
Tenby, Wales.
ironman.com

VOTWO ETON DORNEY TRIATHLON
(various dists)
Eton Dorney, Nr Windsor.
votwo.co.uk

VOTWO SWIM LONG
(various dists)
Eton Dorney, Nr Windsor.
votwo.co.uk

28 **HEVER CASTLE TRIATHLON AND MULTISPORT FESTIVAL (🔴 STANDARD TRI)**
(various dists)
Hever Castle, Kent.
castleraceseries.com

SALCOMBE GIN SPRINT TRIATHLON
(700m S/19km B/3km R)
Salcombe, Devon.
letsgovelo.co.uk

WARWICKSHIRE TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Stratford Leisure Centre, Stratford-upon-Avon.
uktriathlon.co.uk

STOCKPORT TRIATHLON
(various distances)
Poynton Leisure Centre, Stockport.
stockporttriclub.co.uk

ILKLEY SPRINT TRIATHLON
(500m S/14.5km b/4.8km R)
Ilkley, North Yorkshire.
ilkleytriathlon.co.uk

🟢 EUROPEAN CHAMPS QUALIFIER 🔴 WORLD CHAMPS QUALIFIER

OCTOBER

4 DORNEY DUATHLON
(various distances)
Dorney Lake, Windsor.
atwevents.co.uk

KIELDER GRAVEL DUATHLON
(various distances)
Kielder Waterside, Kielder, Hexham.
kieldermarathon.com

LLANDUDNO TRIATHLON
(various distances)
St George's Hotel, Llandudno.
alwaysaimhighevents.com

THE ROC SCOTLAND
(1500m S/52km B/16km R)
Kinlochleven, Scotland.
theroc.com/the-roc-scotland/

TORBAY MIXED TEAM RELAY
(300m S/7.5km B/2km R)
Torbay Leisure Centre, Paignton.
sportivaevents.co.uk

PRESTON PARK YOUTH DUATHLON
(various distances)
Preston Park Velodrome, Brighton.
ppycc.org.uk

5 THRUXTON MASS ATTACK DUATHLON (● SPRINT)
(various distances)
Thruxton Motor Circuit, Hants.
challenging.events

WILMSLOW AUTUMN TRIATHLON
(various distances and events)
Wilmslow Leisure Centre, Wilmslow.
opevents.co.u

THE LAST TRI
(various distances, pool swim)
Freedom Leisure Complex, Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire.
trimaxevents.com

HAMPTON POOL CHILLY TRIATHLON
(various distances and events)
Hampton Swimming Baths, Hampton.
firststrideevents.com

THE REEF TRIATHLON
(various distances and events)
The Reef Leisure Centre, Sheringham.
north-norfolk.gov.uk/TriathlonEvents

TORBAY TRIATHLON AUTUMN
(various distances and events)
Torbay Leisure Centre and Velopark, Paignton.
sportivaevents.co.uk

12 ATW HOLDENBY HOUSE DUATHLON
(various dists)
Holdenby House, Northampton.
atwevents.co.uk

12 MINEHEAD TRIATHLON 2025
(750m S/ 20km B/ 5km R)
The Adventure Centre, Minehead.
channelevents.co.uk

WORCESTERSHIRE/BISHAMPTON AUTUMN DUATHLON
(various dists)
Rise + Grind, Hill Furze Road, Pershore.
entrycentral.com

19 OULTON PARK DUATHLON (● STANDARD)
(various dists)
Oulton Park Race Track, Little Budworth, Cheshire.
opevents.co.uk

SHREWSBURY DUATHLON
(various dists)
Shrewsbury Sports Village, Shrewsbury.
mcafitness.co.uk

26 ATW GRAFHAM DUATHLON
(various dists)
Grafham Water, Huntingdon.
atwevents.co.uk

NOVEMBER

2 DEVON DUATHLON (● STANDARD)
(various distances)
Roadford Lake, Broadwoodwidger, Devon.
sportivaevents.co.uk

9 DORNEY DUATHLON
(various distances)
Dorney Lake, Windsor.
atwevents.co.uk

30 DUNHAM MASSEY DUATHLON
(various distances)
The Bramley Farm, Altrincham.
mcafitness.co.uk

DECEMBER

7 BLACK COUNTRY TRIATHLETES SPLASH AND DASH AQUATHLON
(400m S/ 5km B)
Ounsdale Leisure Centre, Wolverhampton.
blackcountrytriathletes.co.uk

GETTY IMAGES

WILL WETSUITS BE BANNED AT YOUR RACE?

FAQ

When water temperatures rise, there's a chance your triathlon may be non-wetsuit. But what does this mean for you – and how can you make sure you perform to your best without your trusty wetsuit on?

Go to any summer triathlon and a lot of the chat pre-race will be about the swim – mainly "what's the water like"? For many triathletes this can mean nerves around water temperature. Will it be too cool? Or will it be too warm and is there a risk that wetsuits might be banned? First, let's explore what 'non-wetsuit' means and what the rules are at the moment. Under World Triathlon competition rules wetsuit use varies based on age-group and distance of the swim (see the table shown here for the parameters). For the majority of us, this means we're looking at the middle table which means for distances below and including Olympic distance wetsuits will be banned over 22°C. They are also optional between 16°C and 22°C and mandatory below 15.9°C.

Once you go over 1500m (so we're looking at 70.3 and full iron-distance) there's a little more leeway due to the length of time in water. So wetsuits are now forbidden over 24.6°C which also expands the 'optional' category a little.

For elites, under-23s, juniors and youth athletes the top table is the one you need and for age-groupers over 60 it's the bottom table – which simply means you have the same parameters as the longer-distance category for athletes 59 and under regardless of which distance you are racing.

Of course it's a little more complex than that and with health and safety the priority, other things have to be taken into consideration. Maximum time in the water is also considered under World Triathlon guidelines, as is whether a swim needs to be shortened or cancelled due to high or low temperatures.

Advice is also given to race organisers based on air temperature and weather conditions, so if you feel like geeking out on all the possible eventualities then it's worth checking out the full competition rules guidance as well as the British Triathlon competition rules if you are in the UK.

So when will you know whether you can wear a wetsuit or not? World Triathlon guidance has this advice for race organisers: "Water temperature must be taken one hour prior to the start of the event on competition day. It must be taken at the middle of the course and in two other areas on the swim course, at a depth of 60 cm. Where the average measured figure is 27 ºC or below, the lowest measured temperature will be considered as the official water temperature. Where the average measured figure is above 27ºC, the highest measured temperature will be considered as the official water temperature."

Elite, U23, Junior and Youth athletes

SWIM LENGTH	FORBIDDEN	MANDATORY
Up to 1500 m	20°C and above	15.9°C and below
1501 m and longer	22°C and above	15.9°C and above

Age-Group from the youngest to 55-59 category

SWIM LENGTH	FORBIDDEN	MANDATORY
Up to 1500 m	22°C and above	15.9°C and below
1501 m and longer	24.6°C and above	15.9°C and above

Age-Group from 60-64 category to the oldest

SWIM LENGTH	FORBIDDEN	MANDATORY
All distances	24.6°C and above	15.9°C and below

Of course you can get a steer on whether you are likely to be without your wetsuit in the days running up to the event and by taking an informed look at the weather in the preceding week. Also look at previous years' events. Many that are non-wetsuit will tend to be every year – so bear this in mind when choosing your event!

So should you wear a wetsuit if they are optional. My advice here is to consider your swimming ability, how comfortable you are in a wetsuit, how competitive you want to be and also the distance of the swim leg

Most swimmers are faster in a wetsuit due to the hydrodynamic nature of the coated neoprene and the additional buoyancy offered by the rubber. So if you are looking for a speedy time, especially over a long distance, then the time spent taking the suit off in transition will likely be easily saved over the swim.

However if you're doing a shorter distance and are a strong swimmer, or are non-competitive and don't want to wear a wetsuit, then you may prefer to swim without it. Just make sure if the temperatures are at the lower end of the optional category that you are well-acclimatised and confident you can complete the distance without getting cold. Good luck!

GETTY

TRI SPEAK

Wondering what the ‘washing machine’ is, or where to find your M-dot?! Make things easy with our guide to common tri terms…

‘A’-Race The most important race of your season

Age-grouper Non-pro triathlete

Aerobic Aerobic exercise involves oxygen consumption by the body

Anaerobic How much energy your body can produce without using oxygen

Aquabike Race with just swim and bike elements, no run

Bilateral breathing Breathing every three strokes when swimming

Biomechanics The forces applied to your body during exercise

Bonking Running out of energy mid-race or training session

Brick session When you ‘brick’ two disciplines together, e.g. bike and run

Cadence Pedal rate on bike, in revolutions per minute (rpm)

Carb-loading Eating a carb-heavy meal prior to a race to boost energy

Catch The part of the swim stroke where you pull on the water

Core strength Development of the stomach and lower back area in support of strength

DNS/DNF Did not start, did not finish – abbreviations found in race results

DOMS Delayed onset muscle soreness (after racing or training)

DQ Disqualified, abbreviation in race results

Drafting Hitching a ride on someone else’s slipstream in the bike or swim

Drag The amount of turbulent displaced air that an object creates, resulting in a slowing effect

Duathlon Usually a run/bike/run

Electrolyte drink Contains sodium and potassium to help your body hydrate

Elite Another word for a professional athlete

Glycemic index A ranking system for carbohydrates based on their effect on blood glucose levels

HIT High-intensity training

HRmax Your maximum heart rate. Occurs when digging deep!

Hyponatremia A deficiency of sodium found in the blood

Intervals Intensive training using repeated on/off efforts

Kona Place in Hawaii where Ironman World championships are held every October

Lactic acid Produced in high-intensity workouts, it can inhibit oxygen movement around the body and slow you down

DANIEL JAMES MEDIA

Low glycogen training Training without taking on carbohydrates to increase the body’s ability to burn fat

Main set A block lasting 40-50% of a session where the heart rate is elevate.d

M-dot Abbreviation for the Ironman logo

Midfoot strike When running, your front foot strikes the ground flat – as opposed to toe or heel first

Muscular endurance Your muscles’ ability to produce a given level of force for an extended duration

Negative split Completing the second part, e.g a run lap, faster than the first

Overpronation Foot rolls inwards on impact rather than outwards

Overtraining Common symptoms of training too much with inefficient recovery include insomnia, headaches, moodiness, loss of enthusiasm, and increased illness due to a suppressed immune system

PB Personal best

Pronation The natural ‘turning in’ of the foot

Power output Measured in watts on your bike

Pull The mid part of the swim stroke where the hands and arms accelerate using the purchase from the catch

Reps Pre-fixed distances covered and pre-fixed recoveries maintained

Rest interval (RI) Period of rest between reps

Sculling Swim drills that use your hands alone to propel you forward through the water

Sighting Looking ahead/at an object while swimming to keep on course

Swimrun Partner race where you do multiple swims and runs

T1/T2 Abbreviation for ‘Transition 1’ (swim to bike) and ‘Transition 2’ (bike to run)

Taper Reducing your training in the days just before your race

Tempo effort Challenging, sustainable effort

Threshold run A run at about 80% of your max heart rate for no more than 20mins

Time trials A set-distance session, where the aim is to swim, bike or run as fast as you can over the distance

Transition area The place where you rack your bike and swap kit between disciplines

Tri-bars Also known as aerobars, they help you race aerodynamically

Tumble turn Fast way of turning at the pool wall by performing a forward roll, push off and a twist to return to the initial stroke position

Turbo trainer A frame that attaches to your bike, turning it into a static trainer

Underpronation When your foot rolls outwards on impact

V02 max A measure of the body’s maximal ability to use oxygen to produce energy

Washing machine Way to refer to a chaotic swim start!

Watt (w) The unit of measure in which power is expressed

Waves The groups which triathletes are put in to start a race

SWIM THE NIGHT

NIGHT SWIMMING

Ever the glutton for punishment, would a 24-hour swim finally be the challenge to defeat Brunty?

MARTYN BRUNT

Martyn is tri's foremost average athlete and is living proof that hours of training and endless new kit are no substitute for ability.

WEEKEND WARRIOR

I remember doing Ironman Lanzarote a few years ago and seeing a placard on the side of the run which said: "We don't do this because it's easy – we do it because we thought it would be easy." More than any other slogan I've seen, I feel this encapsulates my athletic 'career' – constantly underestimating the scale of the challenge I have signed up for and taking to the start in a state of blissful ignorance, until the bulldozer of reality arrives.

As regular readers will know, every year I like to add some kind of daft sporting challenge to my regular triathlon calendar, partly to give myself something to fear as it looms ever nearer and partly because setting new goals for myself makes my inevitable failures feel fresh and surprising. This year has been no different thanks to something I've just done called Swim The Night.

In 2024, fresh from completing the 21 mile Windermere Double endurance swim, I was looking for something that was easier, but sounded harder, and I happened upon a swim that was only three miles longer, but I had 24 hours to do it in rather than all in one go. I entered. What's the worst that could happen..?

"I realised I was up against it when I got out after mile one and couldn't stop shaking"

Swim The Night is an endurance swim in the outdoor, unheated grandeur of Hillingdon Lido near London. Starting at 7am you have a choice of swimming either 1km or 1 mile every hour for either the next 12 or 24 hours. First timers might, for example, choose to swim 12 km in 12 hours in which case you enter the pool at 7am, swim 1km, get out, get back in at 8am, swim 1km, and so on until 6pm. Overconfident d*ckheads on the other hand would start at 7am and swim 1 mile, and keep doing that every hour until 6am the next morning.

Although I count myself as a confident long-distance swimmer there were some aspects of this event that were new to me – not least staying awake for 24 hours – which were enough to give me that frisson of dread I seem to be addicted to, but on the whole I thought it would be easier than Windermere while making me look more of a hard nut. Wrong!

The first inkling I had that I was up against it was after mile one when I got out and couldn't stop shaking. Despite the heatwaves this summer it was a cool and wet weekend and I just couldn't get warm between swims. I honestly never thought I'd yearn to be back in the water, but it was infinitely better than trying to cram bananas and flapjacks between my chattering teeth during the 30 minute breaks I had between miles.

While I was swimming I was fine – but it was the breaks between swims I found hardest. There were other mental obstacles to overcome too. As we all know the worst bit of any swim is the moment you actually get into the water, and doing that 24 times in a row was a test of character, especially between 1–5am in the morning when you've been awake for 16 hours and everyone you know is in bed.

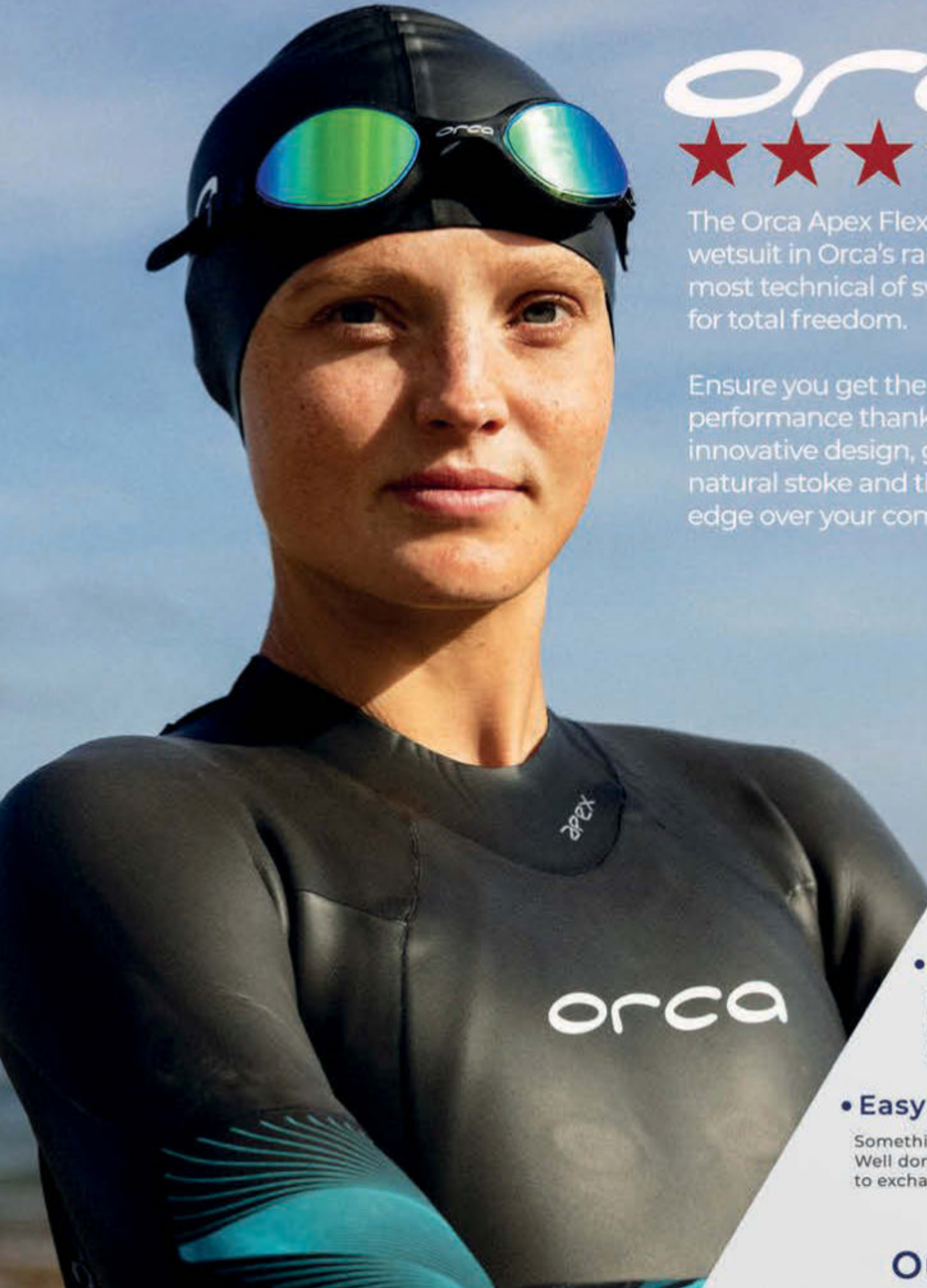
As the event went on I was also aware that numbers were diminishing. Some swimmers had opted to do 12 hours so left at 7pm, others switched to 12 from 24 because of the conditions, and others were swimming well but had to stop after 16 or 17 after succumbing to the cold.

This is where the organisers showed their spirit though, simultaneously keeping everyone safe while encouraging those still going with midnight meals, hot breakfasts, warm room, hot drinks and more and enthusiasm than I'd have if I'd been watching other people swim for 24 hours.

In the end, thanks to their support, there were multiple finishers of the various times and distances, and three of us made it to the full 24 miles/hours, including yours truly who emerged hungry, wrinkly, and strangely energised – which lasted until the car park where I fell asleep for two hours.

Huge congratulations to everyone who took part because that was tough, and massive thanks to the organisers for a brilliant event. Once again I have accidentally ended up doing a proper challenge so naturally I'm on the lookout for something new next year – after all it's not how many times you fall, it's how many times you get up without learning anything… Find out more at **swimthenight.com.** 220

Meguiar's
Since 1901
ULTIMATE
Car Care Made Easy.
Shop Now
@meguiarsuk



orca

★★★★½ RATED BY 220

The Orca Apex Flex is the most flexible wetsuit in Orca's range. It is designed for the most technical of swimmers who benefit for total freedom.

Ensure you get the most out of your performance thanks to Orca's innovative design, giving you a natural stoke and the extra edge over your competitors

orca
assos
dryrobe HUUB
2XU castelli
COMPRESSPORT ZONE3 OAKLEY
CRAFT FUNKITA POC
XLAB ZIPP PROFILE DESIGN
LEZYNE ism body glide MAURTEN

And many more...

Why Choose Us?

- **Personal Service**

For expert and unbiased advice available via call, live chat or email. Office hours are 9am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday but if we're not in, we're guaranteed to get back to you!

- **Next Day Delivery**

Reliable next day delivery options at checkout - no more last minute panic before race day! As long as you're in the UK, you can feel safe that we'll get it to you when you need it. We also offer free delivery on orders over £125!

- **Easy Returns**

Something not right? Was it just not quite what you wanted? Well don't worry! Our returns policy allows for up to 90 days to exchange an item or 28 for a full refund.

Our Favourite Products!

10% Off!
Use Code
MTMAY25

MyTriathlon
The UK's Best Triathlon Retailer

The Triathletes Choice
For All Things
Swim, Bike and Run